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PCComputing

TECHNOLOGY IN THE LANGUAGE OF BUSINESS

Hidden Win98 Utilities
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Disaster-Proof Registry Tips

Best Digital Christmas Gifts

PDA Torture Test, Arrrgh!

Color Lasers For Pennies?

NEW VERSION!

SNEAK PEEK!

WINDOWS 2000

Spy Report: The Easy, Crashproof Windows You've Been Waiting For!

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ervice Provider required. Internet service questions must be resolved by ISP and is not included. ** The TrueBed T

DECEMBER 1998

THEY SAID YOU'D NEVER MAKE IT.
THEY SAID THEY'VE SEEN YOUR KIND BEFORE.
THEY SAID THE MARKET WAS SATURATED.
THEY SAID IT ALL BECAUSE THEY WERE SCARED OF YOU.

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New Rules. New Tools.™

MICRON ELECTRONICS™

VOL. MP SEC. 03
98.12

4 OUTRAGEOUSLY OBVIOUS REASONS TO CHOOSE MICRON

#1 RANKING FOR POWER PRODUCTS

1. Power users have long known that Micron systems are among the absolute best in the industry. The editors of *PC World* Magazine just ranked Micron's Millennia desktop line as the #1 Power Desktop, #1 Home Desktop & #1 Consumer Desktop while *CNET* just named the Micron GoBook the #1 UltraPortable on the market today.

#1 RANKING FOR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

2. Micron's customers are really satisfied — just ask them. In fact, the influential readers of industry bible *PCWeek* ranked Micron desktops #1 in total customer satisfaction.‡‡ And *Home PC* readers voted Micron #1 in providing the industry's best service and support.

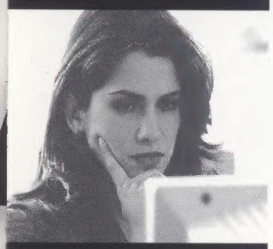
THE THREE THOUSAND EMPLOYEES AT MICRON ARE BUILDING MORE THAN POWERFUL SYSTEMS...

Be Smart.

"Micron doesn't seem to think that budget-class buyers should be excluded from the new CPU sweepstakes. So the company is offering its new, sleekly designed Millennia 450 at an impressively low price... I was knocked out by the Millennia 450's performance."

- *PC World Magazine*, August '98

Pay Less.



Get More.

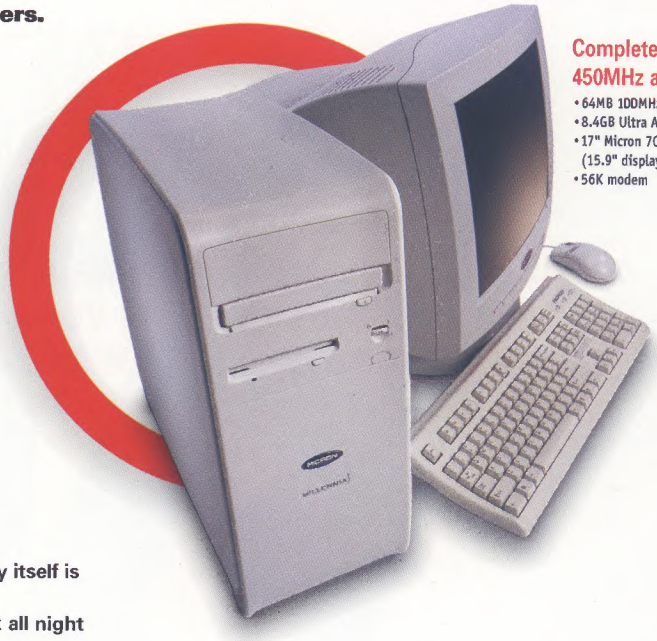
"Micron's support policies are first-rate, with a three-year parts and one-year labor warranty and 24-hour toll-free phone support seven days a week."

- *PC World*, "Best Buy," August '98

Get Ahead.

We're building powerful users.

The landscape has changed. The fundamental rules of doing business are currently being rewritten by a new breed of leaders. And driving these changes is the technology that enables them.



Complete 450MHz at $1699
- 64MB 100MHz SDRAM
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)
- 56K modem

And helping you use our award-winning systems to achieve your goals.

But an award-winning computer by itself is not enough. A computer can't work all night unless you do. A computer can't grab opportunity and mold it into success. To do that, you need more than bleeding-edge technology. You need a company that's been recognized for providing both outstanding products as well as fantastic support. Put simply, you need a PC partner that facilitates your success.

Would you rather write the rules or play by them?

That's exactly what Micron is all about.

If you're interested in helping write the rules instead of being forced to play by them, we'd love to help.

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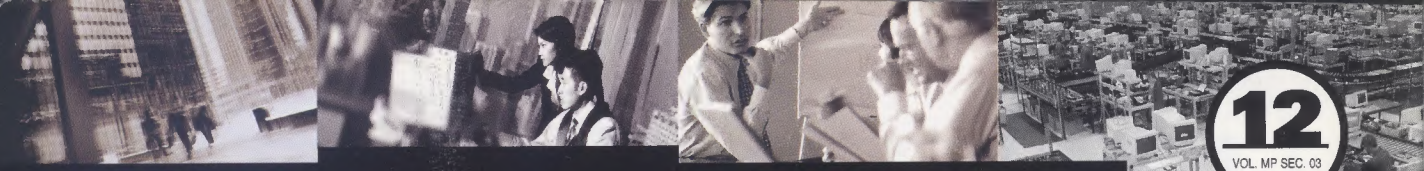
°TechRefresh lease prices are based on a 36-month lease and are available to business customers. Businesses can qualify for 60-day same-as-cash and individuals for 6-month same-as-cash programs. If purchase advance and related charges are not paid in full within 60 days from purchase date for business or within 180 days from purchase date for individuals, finance charges will be assessed from purchase date. APR varies and is 17.65% as of 6/25/98 with a minimum finance charge of $1.00. Term financing is available to individuals for home or business use. PowerXchange accepts trade in of most major computer brands. Please call for details and the latest qualified brand list. Cash rebates are based on the average wholesale value of your PC per the Orion Blue Book, or other source chosen by Micron, adjusted for condition at trade-in.

A non-refundable up-front freight charge applies for participation in PowerXchange to cover cost of return packaging and processing.



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PAYING ISN'T FUN - BLOW IT OFF FOR 6 MONTHS

3. Micron's MPower™ program provides a myriad of flexible financing options including no-interest, no-payments for six months to qualified consumers as well as low monthly payment options on both consumer and business leases. No matter which award-winning system you choose, Micron makes PC ownership a breeze.

TRADE IN YOUR CURRENT PENTIUM® PROCESSOR - CLASS PC

4. Only Micron offers you the option to trade in and trade up today. Trade in your current Pentium processor class computer system(s) from leading manufacturers and we'll give you wholesale rebates with the purchase of new Micron systems. We'll even send you boxes to package up your old PCs.

Award-Winning Complete Internet-Ready† 450MHz Systems Starting at Just $1,699

Model Name	Millennia® C333	Millennia 350	New! Millennia 450	New! Millennia 450 MAX	New! Millennia 450 MAX
Processor	Intel® Celeron™ processor 333MHz	Intel Pentium® II processor 350MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 450MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 450MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 450MHz
Cache	128KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache
RAM	32MB SDRAM	64MB 100MHz SDRAM	64MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM
Hard Drive	4.3GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	13.6GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	14.4GB 7200 RPM Ultra ATA hard drive*
Monitor	15" Micron 700Vx monitor (13.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	19" Micron 900Vx monitor (18" display)
DVD/CD-ROM	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	4.8X DVD-ROM drive
Modem	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**
Graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 4MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 8MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 8MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 8MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	Diamond Viper 550 nVidia TnT, 16MB graphics
Sound System	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound Monsoon MM1000 flat panel speakers
Warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
Price	$1,249 $44/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$1,499 $52/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$1,699 New Low Price! $59/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,499 $87/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,899 New Low Price! $101/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**

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The #1 Ranked UltraPortable - CNET *June '98*
Just 1.35" thin

PCWorld, "Best Buy" April '98"
Replace your desktop with the Micron TransPort TREK

Now Featuring Brilliant 14.1" Display! DVD-ROM drive!

Model Name	GoBook™ 233	GoBook² 266	TREK™² 233	TREK² 266	New! TREK² 300
Processor	Intel Pentium processor with MMX™ technology 233MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 266MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 233MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 266MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 300MHz
Cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache
RAM	64MB EDO DRAM	32MB EDO DRAM	32MB SDRAM	64MB SDRAM	64MB SDRAM
Hard Drive	3.2GB hard disk drive*	3.2GB hard disk drive*	3.2GB hard disk drive (removable)*	3.2GB hard disk drive (removable)*	3.2GB hard disk drive (removable)*
Monitor	12.1" SVGA display	12.1" SVGA TFT display	12.1" SVGA TFT display	14.1" XGA TFT display	14.1" XGA TFT display
CD-ROM	24X CD-ROM drive	24X modular CD-ROM	24X CD-ROM drive (dedicated bay)	24X CD-ROM (dedicated bay)	DVD-ROM drive (dedicated bay)
Graphics	2MB/128-bit graphics accelerator	2MB/128-bit graphics accelerator	4MB AGP graphics accelerator	4MB AGP graphics accelerator	4MB AGP graphics accelerator
Sound System	16-bit stereo/Wavetable sound	16-bit stereo/Wavetable sound	Built-in stereo speakers & microphone	Built-in stereo speakers & microphone	Built-in stereo speakers & microphone
Warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty
Upgrades	Add SuperBase battery for $299	Add SuperBase battery for $299	Upgrade to 128MB SDRAM for $199	Upgrade to 128MB SDRAM for $199	Upgrade to 128MB SDRAM for $199
Price	$1,799 $63/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$1,999 $70/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$1,799 $63/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,599 $91/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,999 $105/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**

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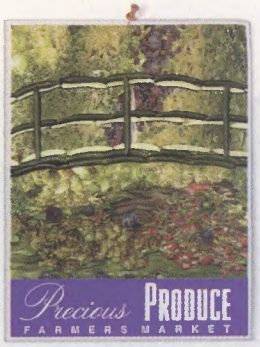

Our 1440 dpi is what lets you see this incredible poster came from a garden – not a painter. It's created entirely out of vegetables. And the farmer's market that sells them was as particular selecting the right printer as they were in choosing their produce. They picked an EPSON Stylus® Color printer with 1440 dpi because to them, detail was very important. Sure, other printers might show heads of lettuce. But they wanted to see every leaf of Radicchio, Bibb and Boston. And so would their customers.

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Introducing the Toshiba Satellite® 4000CDS. The world's leading portable maker unveils the hardest-working, most reliable, feature-packed notebook $1,699 can buy. A blazingly quick 233MHz powerhouse that burns through spreadsheets, multimedia, e-mail, you name it—without burning through budgets. Ounce for ounce,

©1998 Toshiba America Information Systems, Inc. Satellite is a registered trademark of Toshiba America Information Systems, Inc. Intel Inside logo and Pentium are registered trademarks of Intel Corporation. All products and names mentioned are the property of their respective companies. *24X maximum speed, 16X average speed. **Lease rates based on 36-month lease with 10% down payment and fair market value purchase option

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From 36-hour door-to-door Express Notebook Depot repair to on-site service and unlimited technical support worldwide, our suite of services is ready when you are.

LEASE FOR JUST $54 A MONTH

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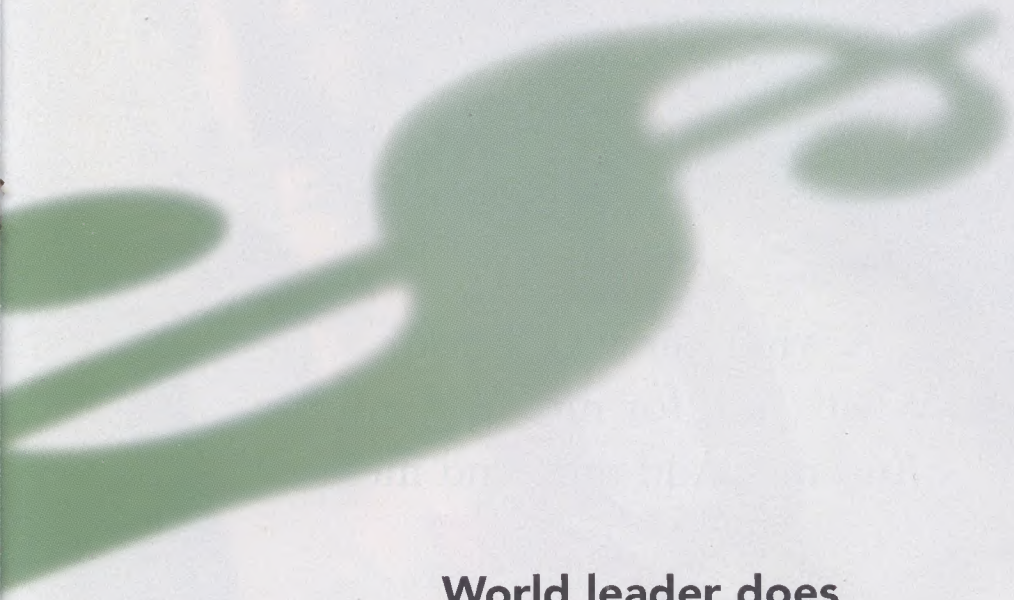

World leader does a number on portables.

byte for byte, dollar for dollar, the Toshiba Satellite 4000CDS is a combination of muscle, features and memory no other notebook can touch. The $1,699 Satellite 4000CDS, exclusively from the award-winning engineers at Toshiba. Bank on it going a long way. And doing the very same for your dollar. To get your hands on this little number, surf www.toshiba.com or call 1-800-TOSHIBA.

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The World's Best Selling Portable Computers.

at the end of the lease term. Lease rates shown based on Satellite 4000CDS at $1,699 for transactions between $25,000 and $50,000. Other lease options may be available. Financing available through Toshiba Financial Services to qualified commercial customers. Rates are subject to change without notice. Prices, specifications and availability are subject to change. Dealer prices may vary. Offer valid in the U.S. only.

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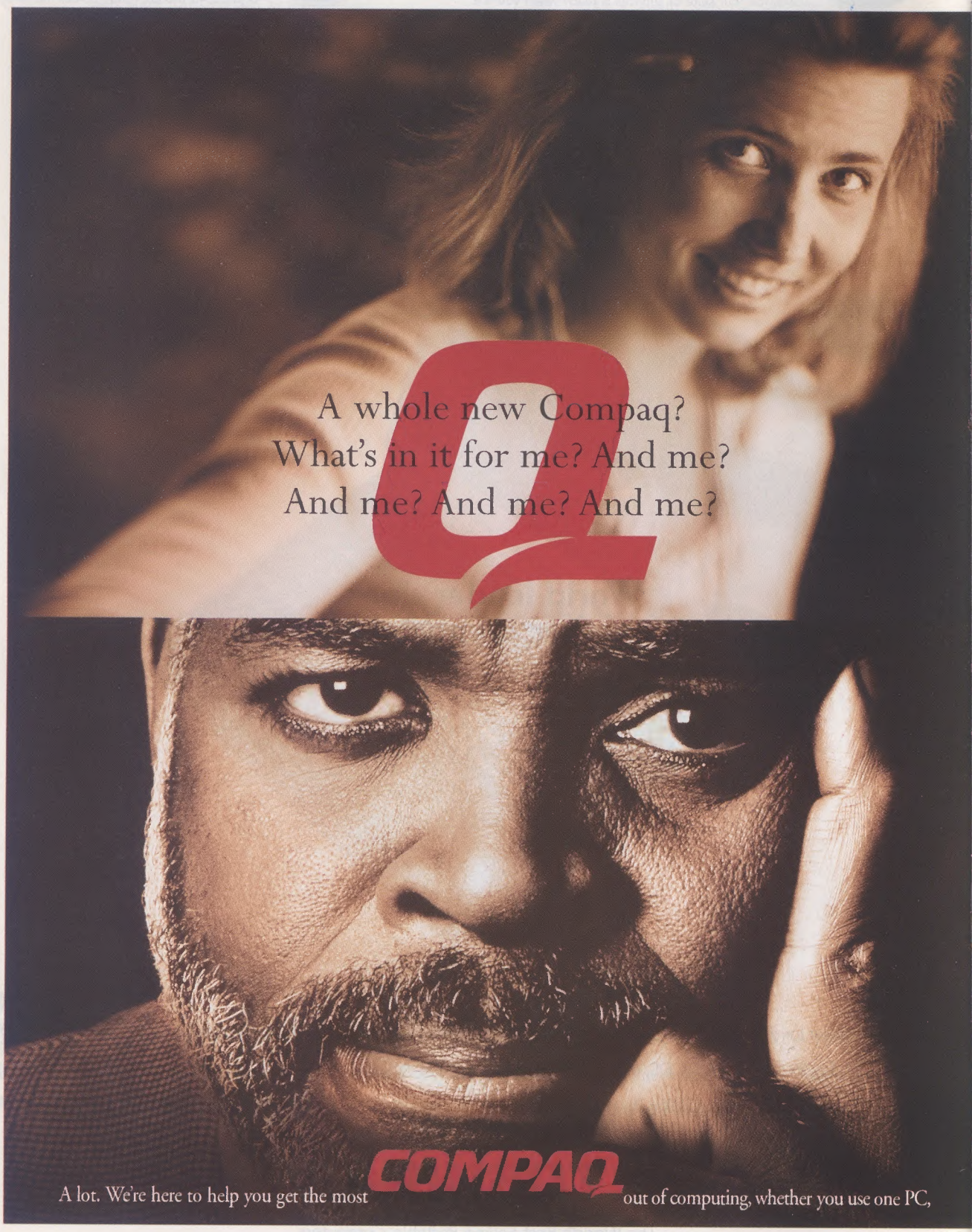
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And me? And me? And me?
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PC Computing's House of Pain

Splash! Crunch! Bang! Thirteen pocket-size PCs take the ultimate punishment. Don't buy another PDA until you read the results of our boot-up-or-die torture tests. 200

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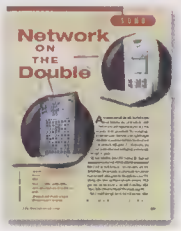
Internet The best of everything on the Web: the top ISP, the best e-broker, the ultimate site designer, and tons of free software. 74

SOHO

Network on the Double



E-mail too slow? Network running out of gas? It's time for a new server. Dual-processor Pentium IIs scream as file, app, and Web servers—and slide big rolls of cash to your bottom line. Lab tests of the top small-office servers. 283

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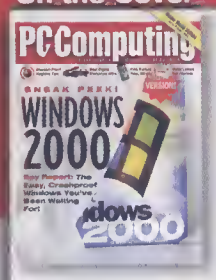

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YOU'RE GONNA FIT 64 MB OF RAM AND A 4.3 GIG HD WHERE?

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SONY

PCG-505FX

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- V.90 modem
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- Windows® 98 pre-installed
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- Touch pad with pen operation
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$2,199.99 Monthly payments as low as $40.30.*

PCG-505F

- Intel Pentium processor with MMX technology 233 MHz
- 10.4" Active Matrix SVGA Display (800 x 600 resolution)
- 32 MB SDRAM (expandable to 96 MB)
- 4.3 GB hard drive
- V.90 modem
- 128-bit graphics accelerator
- Windows 98 pre-installed
- Programmable power key
- Touch pad with pen operation
- Price includes accessories: AC adapter, rechargeable battery, floppy disk drive, port replicator

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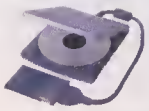
OPTIONAL ACCESSORIES

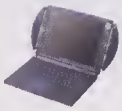
CD-ROM drive



Slim, color-coordinated 14X CD-ROM drive for serious multi-media capability. Or listen to CDs with headphones.

PCGA-CD: $299.99

Stereo speakers



Just clip these speakers on both sides of the display panel for enhanced sound performance.

PCGA-SP5: $99.99

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Holiday Toy Box

Why make this time of year more difficult than it already is? You've got plenty to cope with, from evenings with in-laws who give you indigestion to store clerks in ill-fitting Santa hats dispensing way too much holiday cheer. So let your pal Ebenezer Berst lend a hand with a few shopping pointers. (Disclosure: All of the electronic gizmos mentioned below happen to be on *my* wish list this year. But of course I don't expect anything from *you*.)

Mom She loves to read, but hates spending six or seven bucks on a paperback she'll finish in a couple of days. And you don't want to drive her to the library three times a week, do you? Enter Rocket eBook, the 21-ounce digital book from NuvoMedia. It has memory for the equivalent of ten novels—which you download from booksellers on the Web—and a battery that gives Mom 20 to 45 hours of reading. Your mom's worth $500, right?

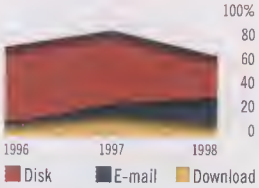
Brother-in-Law DVD may be among the must-have multimedia gifts this season, but if the road warrior on your list is as cheap as the one on mine, he won't buy an expensive new notebook just to get a DVD drive. With EXP Computer's DVD Traveler Plus upgrade kit, he can watch full-length DVD movies on his old laptop. (It'll cost you about $700, so be sure he's the type who reciprocates in kind, if you get my drift.)

Teenager in the House Want more than a grunt when your package is opened? Spring for the next-generation Walkman, the MiniDisc player. It eclipses the old cassette model with near-CD sound quality, it rarely skips during playback, and it's small enough to fit in a shirt pocket or purse. The tiny MD media are encased in plastic, like floppies, so

VITAL SIGNS By Beth Wilson

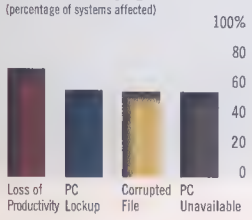
Protect Yourself Communications technology is changing rapidly—but so are the viruses that seek to wreak havoc on your system. While disks remain the most common source of viral infection, their threat will eventually be eclipsed by e-mail attachments. Viruses caught from disks and downloads peaked in early 1997 and have been declining since, perhaps due to the effectiveness of antivirus software. Disk viruses still pose a high threat to the health of your system, but be wary of suspicious e-mail attachments that could land your PC an unexpected trip to the doctor.

Virus Sources
(percentage of systems infected)



SOURCE: ICSA

Viral Effects
(percentage of systems affected)



SOURCE: ICSA

Computer Codependent? Once a virus has burrowed into your system, the most common impact is loss of productivity. How can you meet that five o'clock deadline when you can't access the data you need to support your conclusions? Wrapped up in this mess are computer lockups, corrupted files that can't be opened, and a whole slew of other time-eating productivity drains—including the dreaded Blue Screen of Death and the fact that you can't get to your PC while IS is cleaning it up.

Know Thy Enemy Odds are that you've experienced the Concept virus, responsible for almost a third of all current infections. Creeping up as the next leading sources of infection are the Wazzu and Cap viruses. Concept is infamous for inserting the phrase "That's enough to prove my point" into infected files. Wazzu infects files when Microsoft Word opens them, and commonly takes a random word and moves it to another position in the document. The Cap virus deletes all existing macros in normal.dot and other templates, then hides the Tools, Macro and the File, Template functions.

Dominant Viruses
(percentage of systems infected)

SOURCE: ICSA

Katmai Cometh Intel's 450MHz Katmai processor, arriving next year, promises improved 3-D and floating-point performance.

More Pilot Licenses Two new efforts take aim at market leader PalmPilot: Microsoft intros a new version of the Windows CE spec, and Royal debuts a palm-size device that does much of what the PalmPilot does—for $100.

City Guides Get Lost Today's plethora of city guides will dwindle, replaced by a handful of national and regional powers dishing up local content.

Linux Leaps Ahead With support from heavyweights such as Netscape and Intel, the freeware operating system is gaining big-time momentum—and making Microsoft nervous.

Hayes Heyday Passes The company that invented today's analog modems is leaving that business behind. After a $14 million loss, Hayes will refocus on newer technologies such as cable modems.

By Jesse Berst

For links and more information on any story mentioned here, go to www.pccomputing.com/radar

they're impossible to scratch. And they hold 74 minutes of music! Bottom line: anywhere from $200 to $500.

Boss Man If you get more work done when The Big Guy is occupied, here's a gift that will keep on giving (to you). Channel Surfer TV from ADS Technologies lets him watch TV while "working" at his computer. It also integrates well with his other videoconferencing toys. Keeping the boss at bay will run you about $179.

Search Sites Stink Sure, they're incredibly popular and important, but they're also just plain awful—and getting worse. Most don't invest enough in new technology. Some actually sell rankings in search results. Others censor results from rival sites. And too many are so focused on advertising and marketing that they're neglecting their core job. *Whew!* I feel better now.

Intel Pig Pile Fearing Intel's continued market dominance and ability to extract ever more royalties, PC behemoths IBM, Compaq, and Hewlett-Packard have developed their own enhanced PCI bus on the sly. It purportedly doubles the speed of data movement between a computer's CPU and peripherals. Now all the rebels have to do is persuade Intel to adopt *their* PCI bus instead of the proprietary next-generation bus Intel has been working on. Sure, that's going to happen.

Free E-mail's High Cost Seeking a competitive edge, major portal sites rushed to offer free e-mail services a year ago. Now there are hundreds of ho-hum free services, and the advantage is gone. Consumers, meanwhile, get another lesson from the you-get-what-you-pay-for school: Security glitches and second-rate features mar most of the offerings.

Jesse Berst is the founder of ZDNet AnchorDesk. To sign up for Jesse's free e-mail newsletter, go to www.pccomputing.com/radar.

Want more than a grunt when your package is opened? Spring for a MiniDisc player—this generation's Walkman.

REALITY CHECK — JESSE'S SPIN

WHAT THEY SAY	WHAT THEY MEAN
"What the guy is supposed to do is feel uncomfortable and, when he has bugs, suspect the problem is DR-DOS and then go out to buy MS-DOS." Brad Silverberg, former Microsoft VP, in a 1992 e-mail about company-fabricated error messages in Windows 3.1 designed to scare off users of competing OS DR-DOS, Red Herring Online, August 1998	Here's a case where he said exactly what he meant: Create a fake problem, and make it look like a competitor's screw-up.
"Cybernetics is all about humans and technology interacting. For a professor of cybernetics to become a true Cyborg—part man, part machine—is therefore rather appropriate." Kevin Warwick, a U.K. professor who claims to be the first human to have a computer chip surgically implanted into his body, ZDNN, August 1998	Besides, his students were nodding off in the middle of his lectures. It was either a chip in his arm or a sex-change operation.
"These people are looking for a free ride, and that's not fair to those using conventional long-distance. In effect the mainstream user is subsidizing those using telephony." Bill McCloskey, director of media relations for BellSouth, on plans to charge long-distance access fees to ISPs, InfoWorld Electric, September 1998	BellSouth just doesn't want anything threatening the overpriced careers of its mainstream bureaucrats.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ROB SCHULTZ.

By Don Steinberg

For links and more information, visit www.pccomputing.com/radar

In the House

A 1934 ad in *Electrical Merchandising* introduced Americans to the Thor Electric Servant. It was a multifunction household marvel—a washing machine that doubled as a radio, complete with a glistening *Monel* top ("a place to mix drinks where the varnish won't come off"). Two generations later, Thor's spirit lives. So plug in, mix a drink, and meet some marvelous electronic servants heading homeward this month.

Is Your Refrigerator Running? What OS? Intel once sent anthropologists into suburban homes to see where more microchips might fit—and walked away with an idea for the FridgePad, a touch-screen tablet for the refrigerator door used by a family to coordinate schedules and messages and download traffic info. Now the Japanese company V Sync is prepping a fridge with a touch screen in the door, an Internet connection, and a 333MHz Pentium II. Sounds delicious, but the data/food-storage convergence will climax only when we get a Pentium that starts smelling funky as it becomes obsolete.

The Mayo Added, Coyly, "Close the Door, I'm Dressing!" Japanese shoppers who can't wait for a fully computerized icebox can already buy the Panasonic NR-W5000, which provides voice messages to users, such as "Please reduce the frequency of opening/closing the door."

The Clicker of Tomorrow Now that we've moved beyond the Information Age into the Information-about-Information Age, it finally makes sense to pay $399 for a home-entertainment gadget that does nothing. It merely tells *other* devices what to do. The Philips Pronto universal remote has a cool LCD touch pad and eventually will attach to a PC to download files for controlling new devices. Depending on how many TVs, VCRs, DVD players, cable boxes, and stereos you've amassed, it could improve the quality of your home life by eliminating extra clickers—and actually increase your living space.

Sticky Floors Sold Separately Back in Japan, the busy folks at Panasonic are promoting a movable movie theater built around a lightweight projector and roll-up screen (with speakers built into the tube) that can easily be moved from room to room. The Panasonic TH-100LG1 LCD Projector beams an 80-inch image from any of four positions (including at your feet near the couch).

Donuts and Coffee Without the Danger Another home/hobby gadget getting its first connection to a PC is the police-radio scanner. The nine-band Sony ICF-SC1PC ($430) hooks to a computer via a serial cable and comes with a CD-ROM database of more than 3 million FCC-licensed radio frequencies, making it easy to tune into the juiciest wireless conversations in your area.

Fax Your Toaster Someday the rooms in our homes will be as networked as a corporate headhunter in Cupertino. IBM keeps improving its Home Director, which sends timed on and off signals to lamps and cappuccino makers from a PC through electrical wires using X-10 technology. A starter kit is $99. 3Com's $119 OfficeConnect is a mini Ethernet network-in-a-box, linking two home PCs together and to peripherals. It has a four-port hub, allowing for future PC hookups in growing families. Most interesting is Diamond Multimedia's HomeFree Wireless system, which connects multiple PCs to shared printers or modems using radio waves. A kit with two PC boards is $200.

Enough to Store 38 Boxes of Evidence IBM's nanotechnology research has paid off with the microdrive, a minuscule hard disk that weighs less than an ounce and is about the size of a silver dollar but holds 340MB. Now in prototype, the drive will appear in mid-1999, sliding into the CompactFlash and PC Card slots of gadgets that could include handheld PCs, MPEG cameras, data-organizing cell phones, and the alluring "yet-to-be-invented consumer devices" (which, we can only hope, will be designed with a place to mix drinks where the varnish won't come off).

More Megastorage News Hitachi, pioneer of the MPEG digital video camera, recently unveiled a prototype of a camera that saves movies on DVD-RAM disks, which hold about 5GB each. This stunning advance, which likely won't be available until 1999 is over, gives the camera as much recording capacity on a single disk as—*gulp*—a standard VHS cassette.

Edited by Gordon Bass.

Not Yet **Available only in Europe and Asia, the chrome-plated Nokia 8810 is a digital GSM 900 phone (useless in much of the United States anyway) designed for people with a "special eye for unique beauty." Besides being as shiny as a spoon, it has an infrared port for exchanging phone lists and e-mail with a PC, plus a built-in calculator and calendar. It's only about $1,200.**

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Actually, there is a gift they won't be bored with by New Year's.

This holiday, give your kids a gift that won't end up in the back of the closet. We'll custom-build a Gateway™ PC for children of any age, even as young as preschool, with games and learning software, as well as special hardware like the kidBoard™ Keyboard. And as they get older, you can upgrade your Gateway system to match new interests and offer new challenges. In fact, with the Your:)Ware℠ program[1], you have the option of trading your PC in toward the purchase of a new one after two years. Too bad you can't do the same with your kids' clothes.

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- 4MB AGP Graphics
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- 16MB AGP Graphics
- 10GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- DVD-ROM Drive & MPEG2 Decoder
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64D
- Boston Acoustics BA635 3-Piece Speaker System
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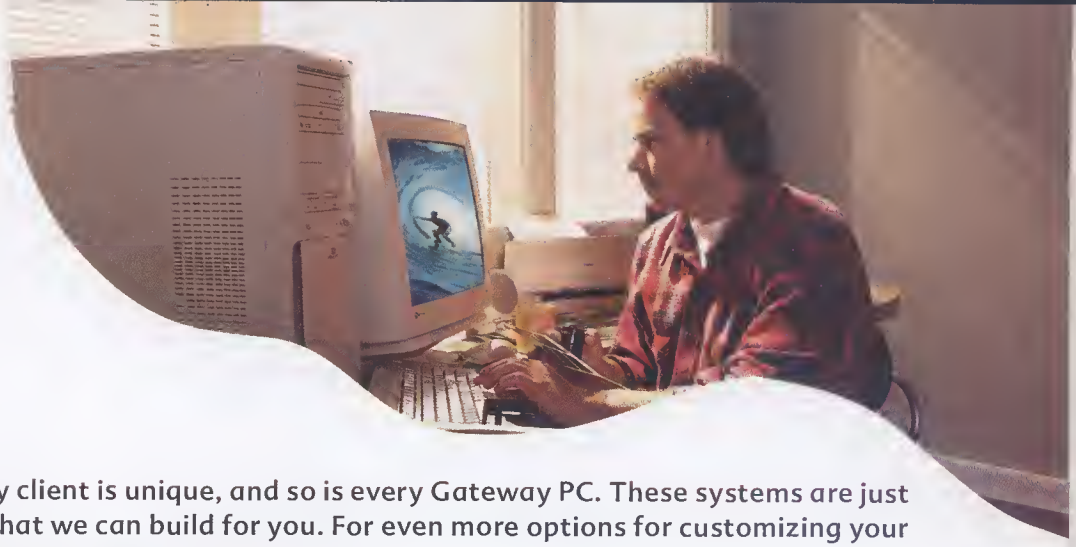

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- Port Replicator
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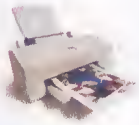

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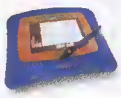

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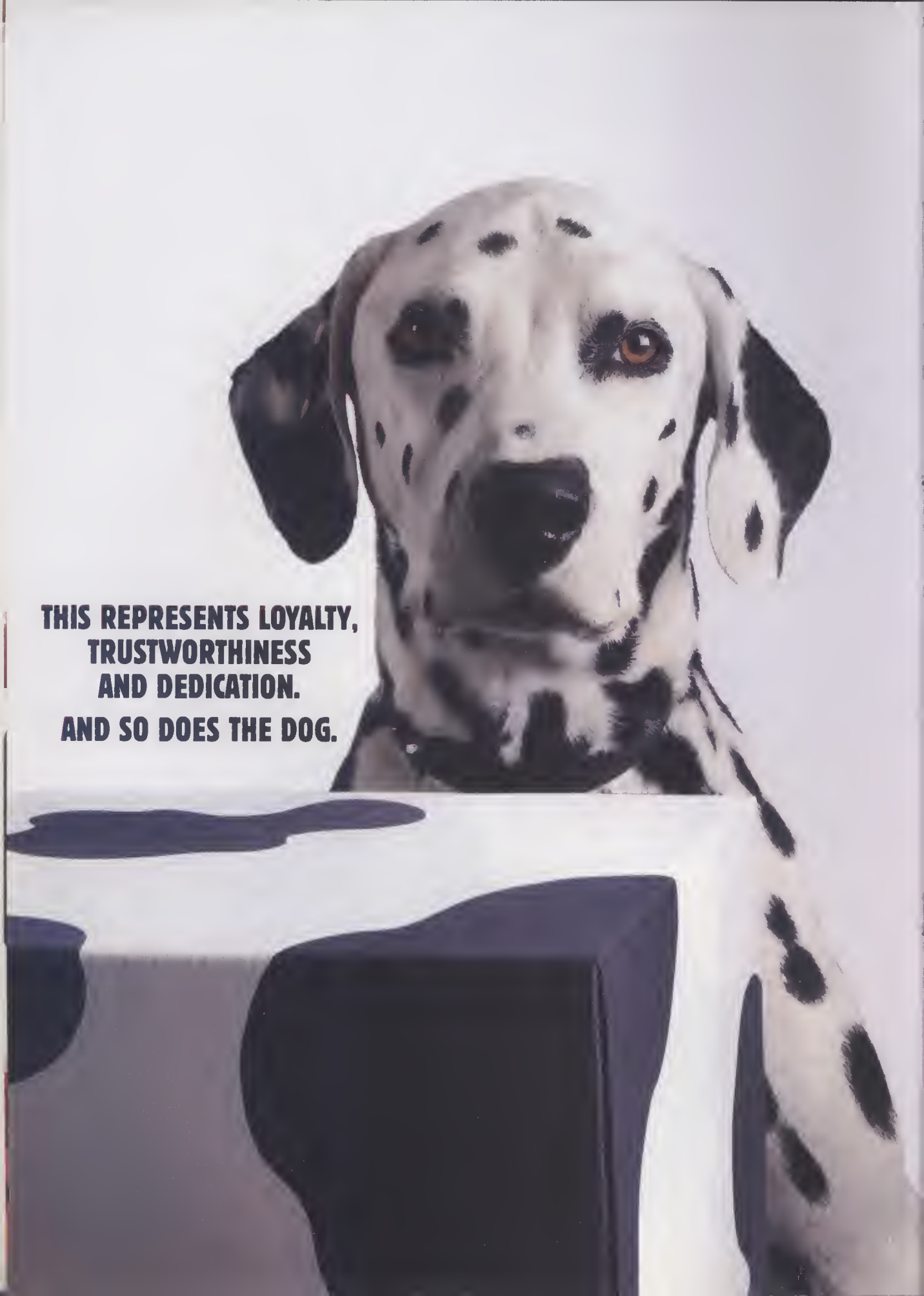
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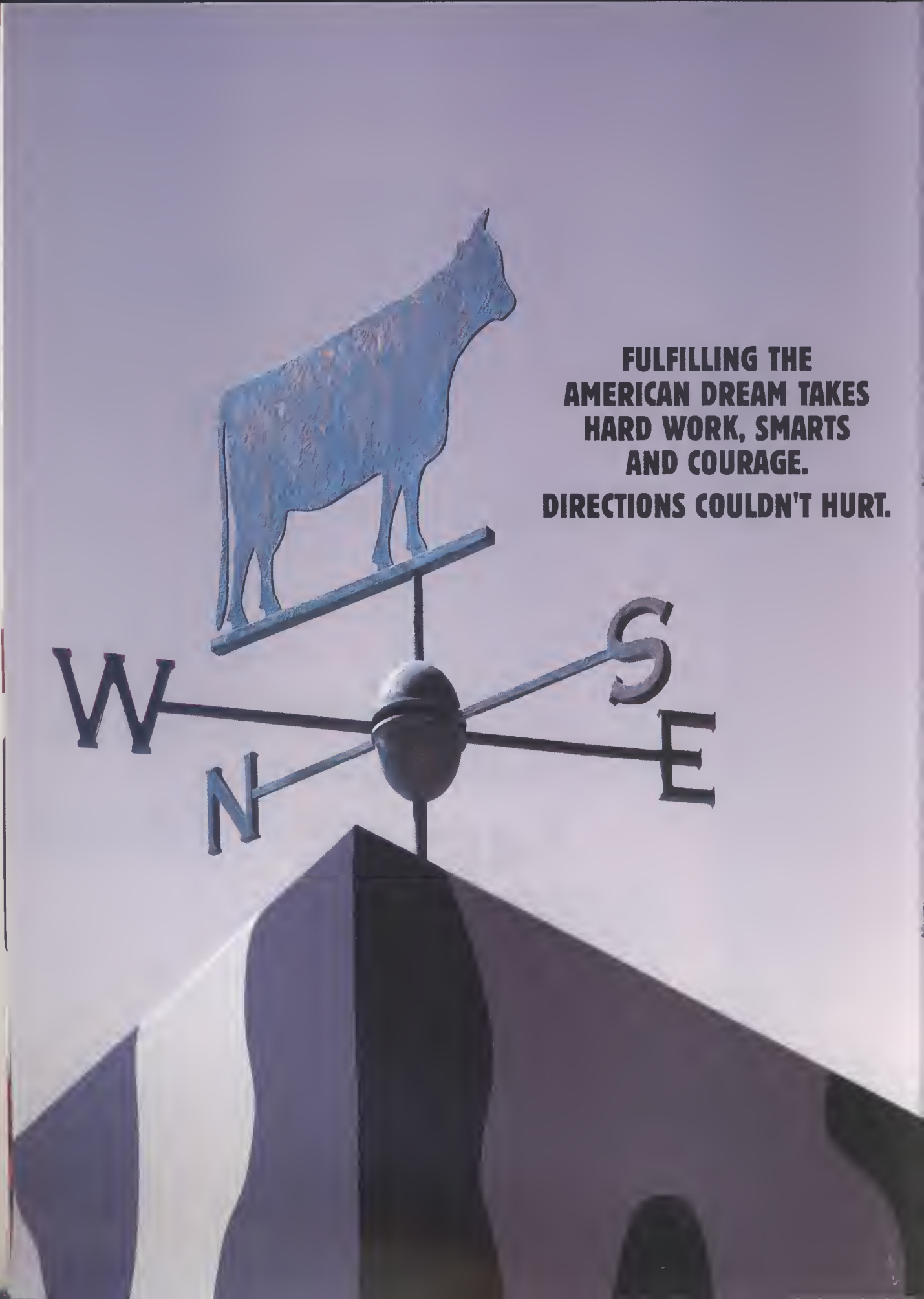
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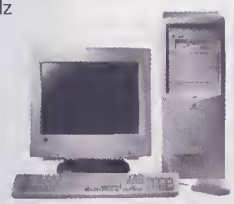

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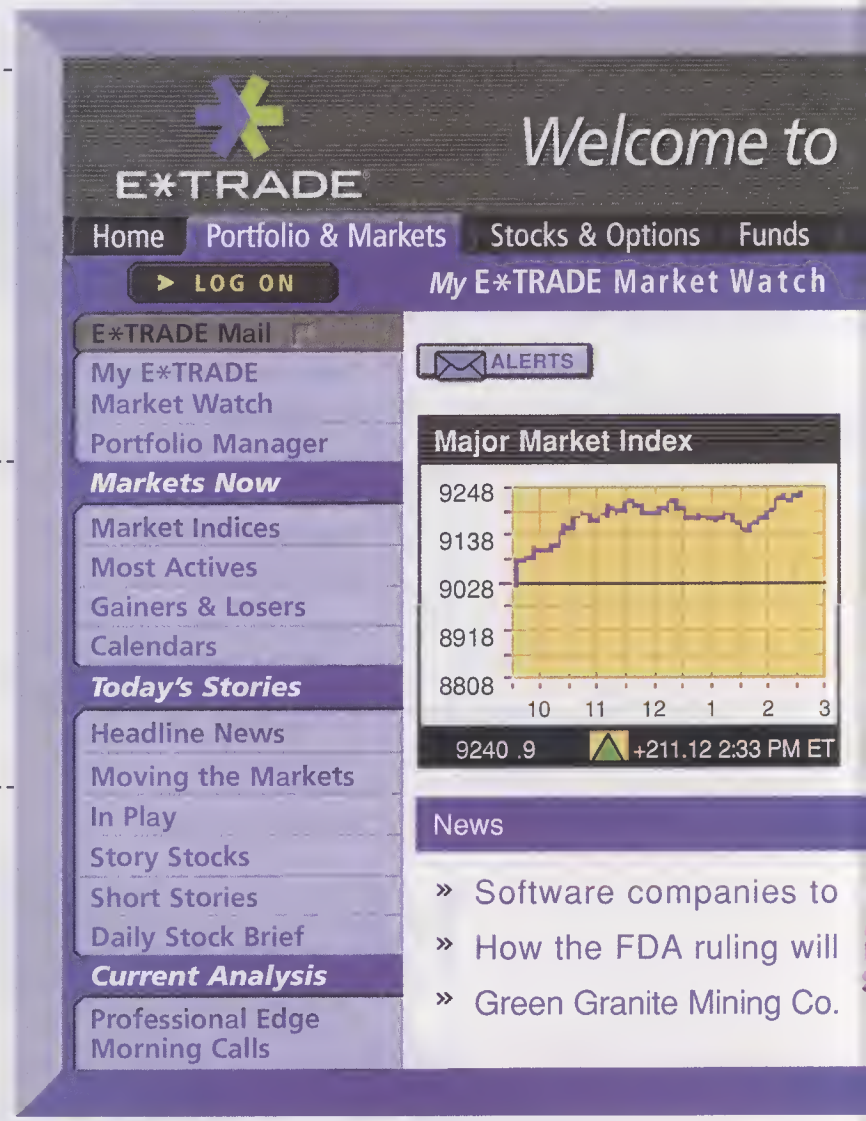

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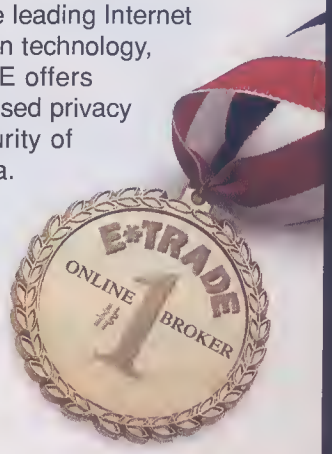

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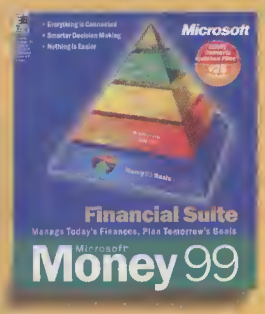

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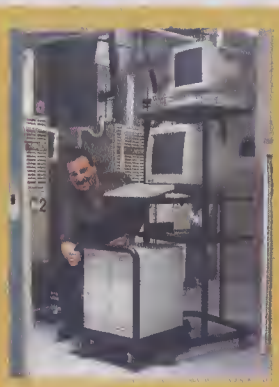

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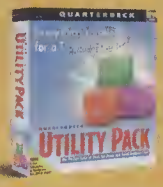

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WINDOWS OUTRAGE

Keep the Roast Warm

Paul Somerson is right on the money in "Scandal" (October, page 77). I'm an IS professional. A colleague and I recently sunk into a deep depression when we realized we'll probably spend the rest of our lives helping people make Windows work. You could call that job security, but I call it nonsense. Give us a real product to support—one that lets us create, not rebuild. Microsoft asks, "Where do you want to go today?" I'd like to be home in time for dinner.

DAVID RESTIVO
VIA THE INTERNET

Follow the Leader

I hope more people with influence follow Paul Somerson's lead and speak up about the nightmare of Windows ("Scandal," October). Corporate management needs to hear about it. Once management realizes how much time and money is being wasted, maybe they'll have some real discussion points next time they're invited to Redmond.

PETER J. KUNZ
VIA THE INTERNET

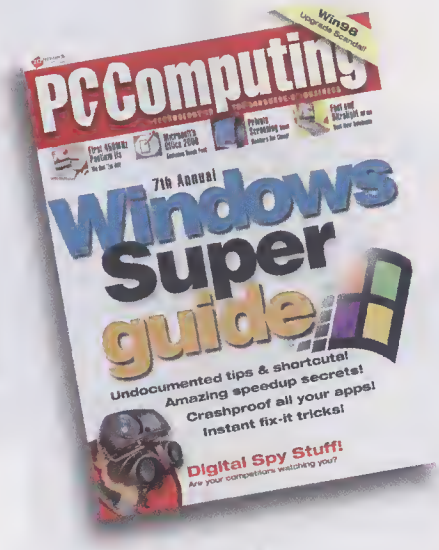
Windows Divorce

Tar baby—an excellent description of Windows ("Scandal," October). And what about the ridiculous gyrations a person must go through to move an NT server from one box to another when doing a hardware upgrade? The only thing that's caused me more grief than the Windows kludge is my ex-wife, but that story would fill the entire magazine.

JOHN PENCE
VIA THE INTERNET

No Fear

Thank you, Paul Somerson, for being one of the few technical journalists who doesn't fear Microsoft and says it like it is ("Scandal," October). Most editors suck up as if their lives and livelihoods depend on it.



Your article is so damned good that I plan to distribute it to my friends.

BOB WEAVER
VIA THE INTERNET

Wizard of OS

Run, Paul, run! The moment "Scandal" (October) hits Microsoft, they'll send their flying monkeys after you. They'll probably get your little dog, John C. Dvorak, too. You'll be dragged through scores of endless seminars given by marketing minions and forced to watch hours of dancing paper clips designed to impress managers

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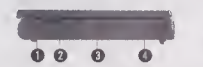

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who control the corporate coffers but don't know the difference between a mouse pad and a monitor. "Oooh," they say, "a flashing button, how pretty." Flee! Save yourself before they innovate you.

DAN KOCH
VIA THE INTERNET

Home Wreckers

Corporate IT support is one thing, but consider the plight of the poor fool who installs Windows on a home computer ("Scandal," October). Most of us work away from home, and out of necessity install new apps at night or on weekends. Unfortunately, Microsoft's free 90-day support line is open only during standard business hours.

JEAN BOUTIN
VIA THE INTERNET

Too Much Downtime

Paul Somerson's "Scandal" (October) is so true. I own a real estate office. This may come as a surprise to some, but we purchased our computers to help us with the real estate market, not OS hacking. I spend at least 10 percent of my time fixing Windows problems. Sometimes I think our precomputer method was better.

JOE D. KINGSLEY
VIA THE INTERNET

Bring in the Feds

Like Paul Somerson, I've been using computers for a long time—nearly two decades ("Scandal," October). I'm no novice. PCs are touted as productivity tools, but I spend 25 to 30 percent of my time keeping mine running. We have become a nation of computer repairmen. I'm fed up. It's time we started expecting as much from Bill Gates and the rest of the computer industry as we do from any other industry. I think it's time for regulation.

SID WEBB
VIA THE INTERNET

Linux Alternative

In writing "Scandal" (October), Paul Somerson has unwittingly penned one of the best testimonials for alternative operating systems that I've ever seen. After reading Somerson's column, how could anyone believe that Windows is the best OS around or that Linux is inferior? Let's face it, we're giving money to Microsoft in exchange for headaches and data disasters. Admittedly, compatibility issues make it tough to switch. This is why I have both Windows 95 and Linux on my machine.

SALVADOR GARCÍA
VIA THE INTERNET

Eight Is Enough

Amen, Paul Somerson ("Scandal," October). I'll always subscribe to *PC Computing* if that man is writing. I just wasted eight days of my life trying to move all my programs and data from one computer to another. I get the feeling that no one has ever attempted that feat before.

JIM LORD
VIA THE INTERNET

NT Death Match

As one of Microsoft's Certified Systems Engineers I've been locked in death battles with every flavor of Windows ("Scandal," October). One of the most annoying pieces of common wisdom is the so-called stability of Windows NT 4.0. Nothing could be further from the truth. Trying to keep dozens of systems running with this Gordian knot of an OS leads to deep, gut-wrenching episodes of endless tinkering, rebooting, and dealing with incomprehensible error messages. As for Windows 98, there should be a recall and a corporate apology from Microsoft.

GEORGE SCHROEDER
VIA THE INTERNET

Simmer Down, Somerson

So what exactly was the point of Paul Somerson's "Scandal" (October)? To rant and rave over one problem? Hey, I don't like Microsoft any more than the next guy, but I installed Windows 98 on top of Windows 95 and that on top of Windows 3.1, and I've never had a serious problem. Maybe it's because I don't install and delete 20 apps a day like a computer journalist does. Somerson is amazed they found 3,000 bugs. Well, I'm amazed they didn't find more. Imagine trying to write such

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sprawling, complex code by committee and have it work with every peripheral and transistor imaginable. Of course the OS isn't perfect, but it works well enough.

J. R. Plosay
via the Internet

Surgeon General's Warning

Thank you, Paul Somerson, for putting my thoughts on paper when writing "Scandal" (October). I couldn't have said it better myself. The operating system drives me crazy. But I've found that regular visits to the men in white coats and loads of vodka help when I'm troubleshooting. They should put a warning label on the Windows 98 box like they do on packs of cigarettes.

Sam Ayersman
via the Internet

Amiga Amigo

I finally gave up on my Commodore Amiga computer because it doesn't support the latest software. I thought I'd be blown away when I started using Windows 95 instead of a 14-year-old OS. Boy, was I wrong. The Amiga OS isn't perfect, but it's a darn sight more reliable and user-friendly than any version of Microsoft Windows. I truly believe Bill Gates is more concerned with making money than with knuckling under and providing the public with a slim, trim, errorless OS.

Kenneth F. Maddox
via the Internet

It Changed My Life

My heartfelt thanks to Ed Bott and Woody Leonhard for the "7th Annual Windows Superguide" (October, page 146). It's a godsend. Thanks to columnists like Bott, Leonhard, and Ron White, *PC Computing* has risen to a new level.

Carroll Coleman
via the Internet

Who's Right?

I'm confused. In your "7th Annual Windows Superguide" Ed Bott and Woody Leonhard suggest that we update Kernel 32 if we're running OSR2 (October, page 154). But Microsoft's Web site says: "Do not install the Kernel Update on a machine with Windows 95 OEM Service Release 2 (OSR 2) installed.... Your system already contains the appropriate fixes."

Rick Steedle
via the Internet

RICK IS RIGHT, and we've updated the *PC Computing* Web site to reflect this change. The good news is that attempting to install this update will not harm your PC; Windows will detect that you have a more recent version and ignore the update. **EB**

Do the Math

A line in October's "7th Annual Windows Superguide" left me and my friends a little confused. Ed Bott and Woody Leonhard write, "That's gigabytes with a g, as in 1,000MB" (page 190). Didn't a gigabyte used to be 1,024MB?

Brian Kyle
via the Internet

LESSEEE . . . is that in troy ounces or avoirdupois? To the, uh, fastidious, 1GB is 1K x 1MB, so it's 1,024 x 1,024. Now—no fair reaching for the calculator—how much is that? *Bzzzzt.* If you said 1,073,741,824 you're right. Hey, what's a 7.3741824 percent round-off error among friends? **WL**

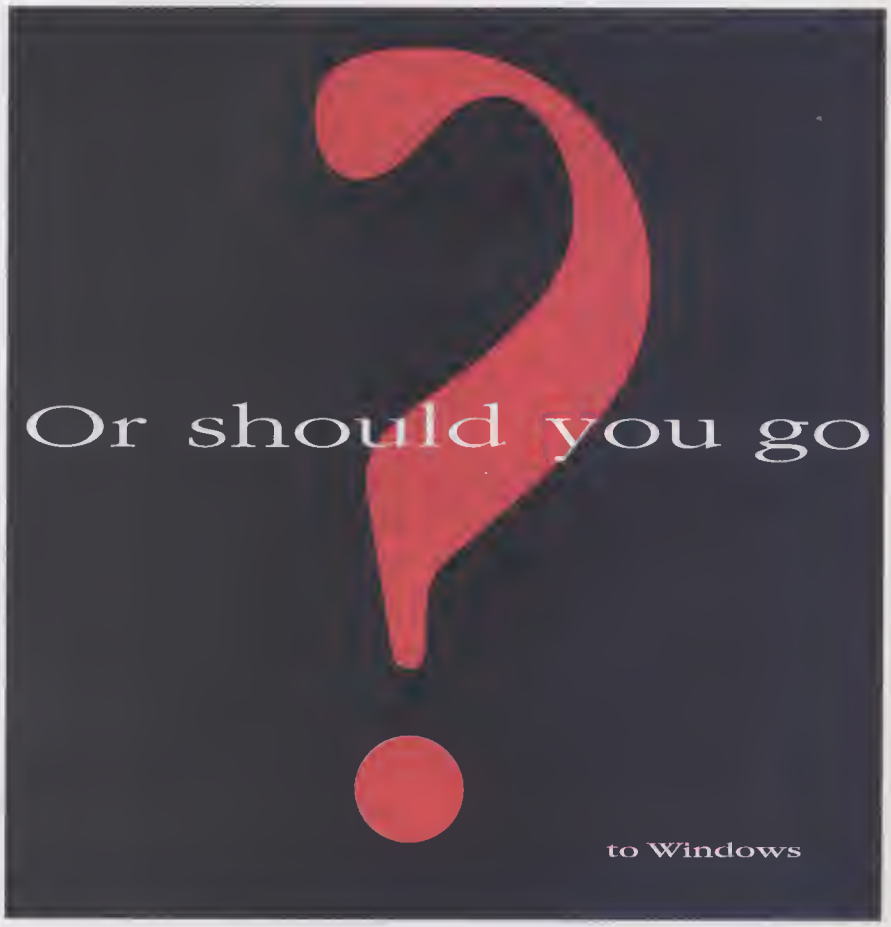
Can't Wait

I almost completely agree with John C. Dvorak's October column ("DVD Debacle," page 81). DVD should have been standardized within the PC industry before the entertainment industry in order to increase the longevity of the medium. But I don't believe that "computer users tolerate bickering and changing standards better than consumers." Personally, I'm infuriated over the DVD-RAM and DVD-RW standards war. We've been waiting far too long.

Darrell L. West
via the Internet

Down with DIVX

What makes John C. Dvorak think the movie studios would support—or even



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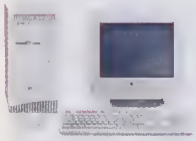

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allow—a format with better resolutions than DVD ("DVD Debacle," October)? The studios hate the idea of near-perfect masters of their films floating around. But DIVX deserves the full force of Dvorak's editorial ire. Imagine if the DIVX purchase model moved from home video to PC software? How about 700 words of pure Dvorak venom on that scenario?

R. F. Nee
via the Internet

Driving Me Crazy

I was surprised to see that John C. Dvorak didn't mention the problem of installing Windows 98 on PCs equipped with a DVD-ROM drive ("DVD Debacle," October). If you look at the DVD drivers in the upgrade or full versions of Windows 98, you'll find only ones for Toshiba and Cinemaster drives. If you have any other DVD-ROM drive, get ready for trouble. For example, I have to use a third-party DVD software decoder—Zoran SoftDVD—in order to use my DVD-ROM drive.

Amer Shaaban
via the Internet

DVD Hype

As the engineer who wrote most of the optimized MMX and floating-point code for Zoran SoftDVD (the first software DVD player), it amazes me just how out of sync the following groups are: computer system OEMs, the general news and computing press, the DVD press, the CE industry, and the DVD PC industry ("DVD Debacle," October). The bottom line is that too many people bought too much of the hype. And when the sales didn't match the expectations there was a lot of negative ink. This is not to say that there haven't been lots of good reasons for scathing articles, but slow sales isn't one of them.

Mike Schmit
via the Internet

Watch Out, VHS

My business is a relatively new player in the volatile world of selling DVD movies via the Web. John C. Dvorak is correct in saying that DVD is another form of the unpopular laserdisc ("DVD Debacle," October). But laserdiscs were never as publicly endorsed by all the major motion picture studios the way DVD titles are. As far as DIVX goes, most studios now refuse to endorse it, and a joint venture between Circuit City and DIVX has crumbled. For home movies, the DVD industry currently has no major competitors besides the VHS industry. And when recordable DVD drives become mainstream, look out.

Mitch J. Pomerance
via the Internet

Search Snafus

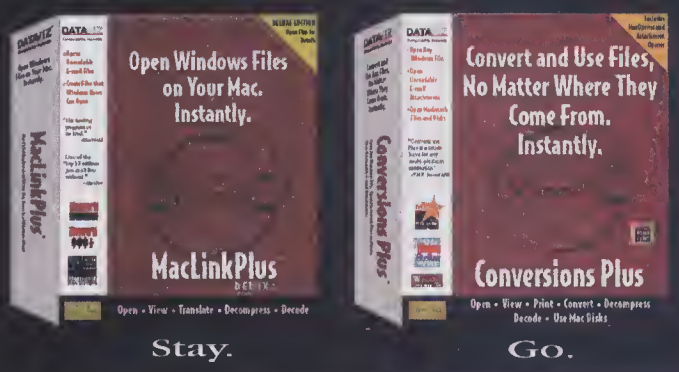
Search engines have some major problems ("Dead Ends," Taylor & Jerome, October, page 79). I'll lay out the problems, and somebody else can fix them. To start with, the engines can't handle more than a two-word search with any degree of accuracy. Moreover, they can't keep two searched-for words together. For example, if you perform a search on *black iron*, you'll get *black mountain iron extract* and *iron oxide*. More annoying yet, search engines offer no way of getting to a root URL. So if you search for *dinnerware*, you might get 30 entries, but each is a single item from the Lenox catalog. Engines can't seem to search on the basis of last-modified dates, so you get ancient information. Finally, no search engine offers a means of getting corporate e-mail addresses.

Jack Belck
via the Internet

My Morning Portal

Taylor & Jerome really miss the entire point of portals in their October column ("Dead Ends"). Although portals may contain search engines, searching isn't their primary function. They're for busy people who want to quickly check out stock prices, the latest weather forecast, ball-game scores, and so on. When I log on to the Internet in the morning, I sometimes use several portals and quickly get the answers and information that I need. I could get more detailed information using bookmarks of specific Web sites, but that takes way too long

Whatever.



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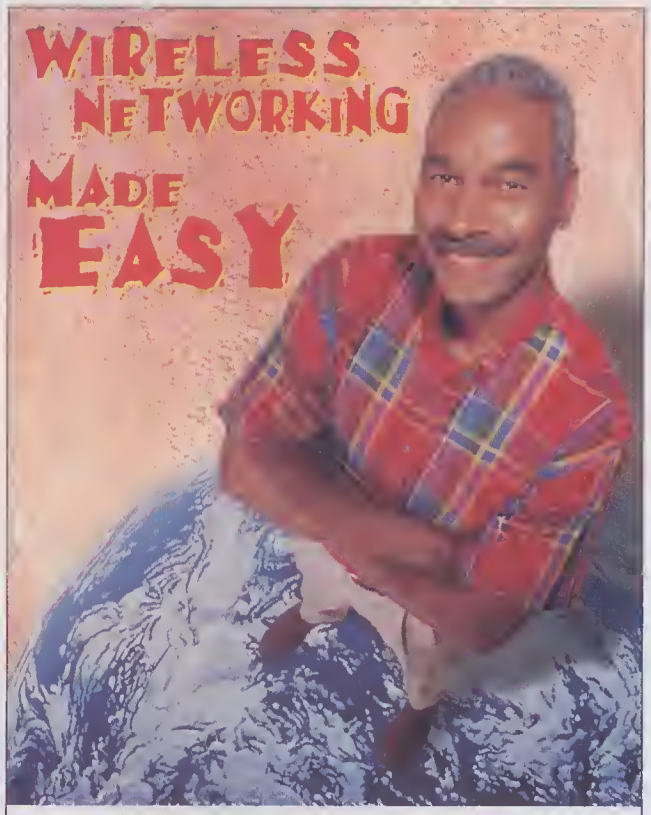

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JAMES J. MANSEAU
VIA THE INTERNET

Crossbreeding

I laughed out loud when I read "Dead Ends" (October). It's a great piece, but I wonder why Taylor & Jerome didn't consider the desktop answer to portals—the AltaVista Discovery monstrosity and the less horrible Inforian. They both have problems, but they also have some merits. If you could couple their good aspects with the strong parts of the search engines discussed in "Dead Ends," you might have something.

JONATHAN BROWN
VIA THE INTERNET

Up to Speed with Woody

My ISP recently upgraded to the V.90 standard and my connection performance went downhill fast. I badgered my ISP for two weeks only to realize that they know less than I do. I played with MTU values for quite a while but to no avail. Then Woody Leonhard suggested an MTU value of 1,024 ("Internet Speed Tricks," Help, October, page 266). Instant double-speed increase. Woody, thanks a million.

JEFF CARANO
VIA THE INTERNET

Roadside Emergency

Thank you, Woody Leonhard. I was traveling on business and lost my Web connection—a crippling event in my line of work. By chance I had your October issue in my suitcase, and when I opened it for the first time I flipped to the Projects section ("Foolproof Web Connections," Help, page 259). With Woody's help I restored my connection and resumed work. Amazing.

ANDREW AUSTIN
VIA THE INTERNET

Tweak Tweak UI

I downloaded the Tweak UI utility that Woody Leonhard pitches in the September issue ("Custom Windows Hacks," Help, page 249). I followed the installation instructions, but no icon showed up in the Control Panel. Any ideas?

DAN DE SOUSA
VIA THE INTERNET

THAT'S STRANGE. You right-clicked on tweakui.inf and picked Install, and there's no Tweak UI icon in your Control Panel? Any chance you picked up the wrong version—say, the Win98 version installed on a Win95 machine? **WL**

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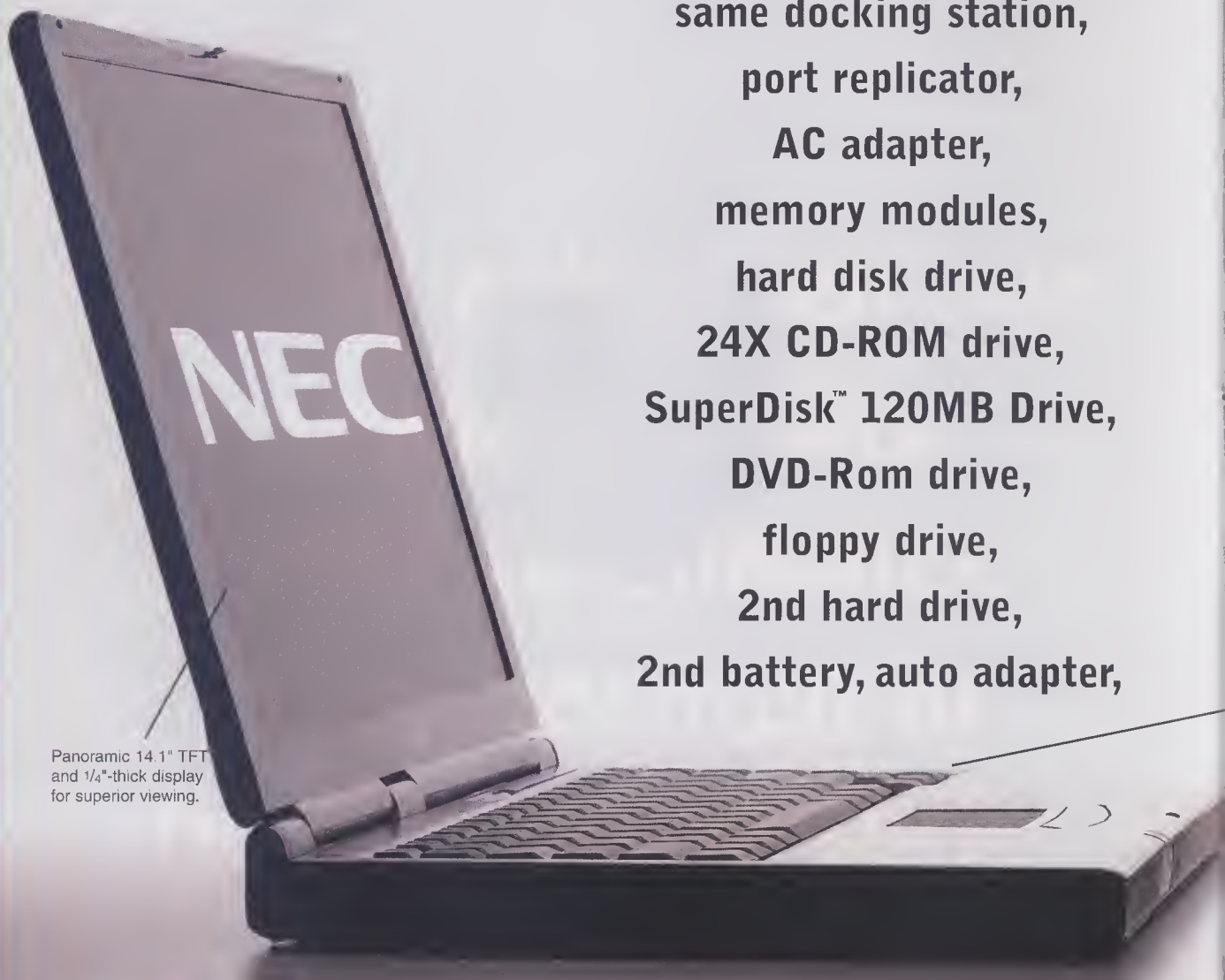

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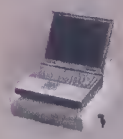

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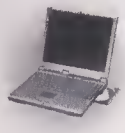

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A-List

Editors' top picks in 100 hardware, software, and Internet categories. **Edited by Wendy Taylor and Kyla K. Carlson**

DESKTOP SYSTEMS

Vroooooomm! Intel will release CPUs clocking speeds faster than 450MHz as soon as early 1999. Get your purchase orders in now.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
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High-Performance PC Dell Dimension XPS R400	**A steal at under $3,000—DVD and 56K modem included.**	$2,399, 400MHz Pentium II, 64MB RAM, 14.4GB hard drive, 56Kbps modem, DVD. (800) 388-8542. See Aug. 1998, page 168.
Desktop Workhorse Hewlett-Packard Vectra VL Series 8	**A great deal for neck-snapping performance—at a price you can afford.**	$1,997, 333MHz Pentium II, 64MB RAM, 6.4GB hard drive. (800) 322-4772. Stay tuned.
Low-Cost Desktop PC Compaq Presario 2256	**It's no mirage: Get a loaded 300MHz Pentium II for under a grand.**	$998, 300MHz Pentium II, 48MB SDRAM, 15-inch monitor. (800) 345-1518. Stay tuned.
SOHO System Gateway G6-300	**Buy a 300MHz Pentium II screamer with DVD—and get a Canon color printer thrown in for free.**	$1,598, 300MHz Pentium II, 32MB RAM, 5GB hard drive, DVD, 17-inch monitor, color printer. (800) 846-2000. Stay tuned.
Pricewise Direct System Quantex QP6/450 SM-4x SE	**The fastest 450MHz system out of the gate is also the most affordable. We'll take it!**	$2,499, 450MHz Pentium II, 64MB SDRAM, 14.4GB hard drive, DVD, 19-inch monitor. (800) 787-8686. See Oct. 1998, page 95.

SERVERS

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Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
High-Performance Web Server Micron Electronics NetFrame 3100	**Why make them wait? Give your Web customers what they want before they click away.**	$7,499, two 400MHz Pentium II CPUs, 512MB RAM, four 4GB hard drives. (888) 634-8799. See this issue, page 283.
Small Workgroup Server Compaq ProLiant 1600	**A glutton for punishment. As the network load increases, its stunning performance gets even faster.**	$12,686, two 400MHz Pentium II CPUs, 512MB RAM, six 4.3GB hard drives. (800) 879-3355. See this issue, page 283.
Large Workgroup Server Dell PowerEdge 6300	**Give everyone in the office a perk with Dell's quad-CPU Xeon powerhouse. Usability and reliability are top-notch too.**	$31,361 direct, four 400MHz Xeon CPUs, 1GB RAM, six 9GB hard drives, (800) 388-8542. See Nov. 1998, page 90.

PORTABLE SYSTEMS

Clunk! Crunch! Splash! Is your handheld PC tough enough? Find out in this month's PDA torture test on page 200.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
State-of-the-Art Portable NEC Versa SX	**As good as it gets in a full-featured portable.**	$3,799, 300MHz Pentium II, 64MB RAM, 4GB hard drive. (888) 863-2669. See Oct. 1998, page 86.
Traveling Multimedia Portable IBM ThinkPad 600	**The most convenient way to take 266MHz Pentium II power on the road. Even with a 13-inch screen, it's still under 6 pounds.**	$3,599, 266MHz Pentium II, 32MB RAM, 4GB hard drive. (800) 426-7255. See Sept. 1998, page 196.
Workhorse Portable Dell Latitude CPi D266XT	**Great dollar value in Dell's torture-tested design.**	$2,799, 266MHz Pentium II, 64MB RAM, 4GB hard drive. (800) 388-8542. See Sept. 1998, page 184.

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.

A-List

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PORTABLE SYSTEMS continued

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Lightweight Traveling Companion Toshiba Portégé 3010CT	**So small it vanishes in your briefcase; so well designed you won't miss your hulking desktop PC.**	$1,999, 266MHz Pentium, 32MB RAM, 4GB hard drive. (800) 867-4422. See this issue, page 96.
Handheld Portable 3Com Palm III Connected Organizer	**The most usable handheld is also the most durable. The Palm III survived our torture test without so much as a scratch.**	$369, 2MB RAM, backlit display, 6 ounces. (800) 881-7256. See this issue, page 200.

PRINTERS

Cost Cutter Stop throwing away money on expensive color copies. Lexmark's Optra Color 1200 gives everyone on the network laser color.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Low-Cost Desktop Laser Printer NEC Technologies SuperScript 870	**The best gets better. The new SuperScript 870 sports a sleek new design and much-improved paper handling.**	$349, 600 dpi, 8 ppm, handles up to 500 sheets of paper. (800) 632-4636. See Oct. 1998, page 108.
High-Speed Desktop Laser Printer NEC Technologies SuperScript 1260	**Cut the office wait around the printer queue and boost productivity in the bargain. Offices should have at least two.**	$699, 12 ppm, 600 dpi, network option. (800) 632-4636. Stay tuned.
High-Speed Network Laser Printer Xerox DocuPrint N32	**Serves up excellent paper handling and blazing-fast speeds. For killer graphics output, check out HP's LaserJet 8000.**	$2,900, 32 ppm, 600 dpi, Ethernet adapter. (800) 349-3769. See Oct. 1998, page 98.
Multifunction Device Canon Computer Systems MultiPass L6000	**Get crisp laser output. Get 6-ppm print speeds. Get a scanner, copier, and fax in one. And get it all for less than $600.**	$599, 600 dpi, 6-ppm laser engine. (800) 652-2666. See Sept. 1998, page 237.
Desktop Color Printer Epson Stylus Color 850	**Stunning 1,440-by-720-dpi output that's worth the wait. Use coated paper and you'll swear the photos are from a darkroom.**	$349, 1,440 by 720 dpi. (800) 463-7766. See Sept. 1998, page 100.
Low-Cost Network Color Printer Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 1600CM	**The least expensive way to give everyone on the network ink-jet color output. It's fast too.**	$1,999, ink jet, 4 ppm color, 9 ppm black. (800) 752-0900. See Jan. 1998, page 162.
High-Speed Network Color Printer Lexmark Optra Color 1200	**Why wait for color? With the Optra Color 1200 you don't have to. It hits color speeds of up to 12 ppm. Wow!**	$5,999, 600 dpi, 12 ppm color, 12 ppm black. (800) 539-6275. See this issue, page 104.
Personal Photo Printer Hewlett-Packard PhotoSmart	**Who knew that photos from your PC could look this good on paper? Another surprise: This printer's affordable.**	$299, color ink jet. (800) 752-0900. See Nov. 1998, page 240.

STORAGE

Sasquatch Watch Moore's Law states that drives will keep getting bigger and prices will keep dropping. Quantum's Bigfoot TS 19.2GB is living proof.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Hard Drive Quantum Bigfoot TS	**It holds 19.2GB of data, the equivalent of the information stored in a stack of phone books rising 85 stories. Enough said.**	$339, 19.2GB Ultra ATA, 10.5ms average seek time. (800) 624-5545. Stay tuned.
Removable Storage SyQuest SparQ 1.0GB	**Iomega's Jaz has a two-year head start, but SyQuest's SparQ is faster and cheaper.**	$199, $39 for disks, 1GB EIDE, 12ms seek time. (800) 245-2278. See July 1998, page 189.
CD-ROM Drive Hi-Val TrueX 40x40 CD-ROM	**Zen Research and Hi-Val have a 40X CD-ROM drive. Can transfer rates of 6MBps be for real? Is anything real?**	$179 for internal EIDE/ATAPI drive, 40X read. (714) 953-3000. Stay tuned.

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE.

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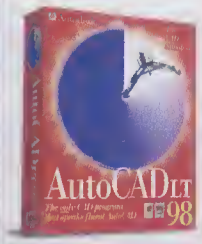

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STORAGE continued

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
CD-Rewritable Drive Smart and Friendly CD Rocket	**Burn a full 650MB CD in 17 minutes without even cracking the manual. Great for custom audio CDs too.**	$999, internal SCSI drive, 20X read, 8X write. (800) 959-7001. Stay tuned.
Network Storage Seagate Technology Barracuda 18	**If your network drive goes down, your business is fish food. Give yourself an edge in the food chain with the Barracuda 18.**	$1,149, 18GB, 100MBps peak transfer rate. (800) 732-4283. See Mar. 1998, page 176.

PERIPHERALS

Flat Out Loud First there were flat-panel monitors, now there are flat-panel speakers. There's nothing flat about the sound though.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Personal Document Scanner Agfa SnapScan EZ	**Make instant copies, put your filing cabinet on a CD, tame your paper in-box, and do it all with the push of a button.**	$129, 600 by 1,200 dpi. (888) 281-2302. See Nov. 1998, page 230.
Graphics Scanner Epson Expression 636 Artist 2	**Graphics experts have nothing on you, thanks to the Expression and its tools. They'll be drooling over *your* scans.**	$699, 600 by 1,200 dpi, 36-bit color. (800) 463-7766. See Nov. 1998, page 230.
Digital Camera Eastman Kodak DC260	**You can have it all in a digital camera: gorgeous pictures, a 3X optical zoom, and a fast USB port for connecting to your PC.**	$899, 1,536 by 1,024 dpi. (800) 235-6325. See Nov. 1998, page 218.
Sound Card Creative Sound Blaster Live	**Is it real, or is it coming from your sound card? You won't believe your ears. Plus it's loaded with software.**	$199, PCI audio, 256 voices. (800) 998-5227. Stay tuned.
Speakers MidiLand S2 4100	**Sound that rivals your stereo system: two compact satellites that won't clutter your desk and a subwoofer for serious bass.**	$400, 25-watt satellites, subwoofer. (888) 592-1168. Stay tuned.
Uninterruptible Power Supply American Power Conversion Back-UPS Pro 650	**Zap! Don't let a power spike take your data out with it. APC's UPS has you covered.**	$265, 650-VA UPS, three battery-backup outlets, three surge-only outlets. (800) 877-4080. See Apr. 1998, page 220.
Input Device Logitech Cordless Wheel Mouse	**What's better than a wheel mouse? How about one that's cordless? Works well for southpaws too.**	$60, radio frequency controls, Windows 95. (800) 231-7717. See this issue, page 118.

VIDEO HARDWARE

Brace Yourself Riva TNT-based graphics cards are this season's hit for 3-D games; watch for Voodoo Banshee-based cards to take off next.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
High-Resolution 21-Inch Monitor Sony Multiscan GDM-500PS	**Spoil yourself. You can afford to with Sony's ultrasharp big-screen Trinitron display.**	$1,250, 21-inch, 1,600 by 1,200 resolution at 85Hz. (800) 352-7669. See July 1998, page 96.
High-Resolution 17-Inch Monitor Sony Multiscan GDM-200PS	**Priced a bit higher than the competition, but you're worth it, right?**	$700, 1,600 by 1,200 maximum resolution at 70Hz. (800) 352-7669. Stay tuned.
Flat-Panel Display NEC Technologies MultiSync LCD2010	**Twenty inches of gorgeous flat-panel display. Think you can handle it?**	$4,599, 20.1-inch viewable area, 1,280 by 1,024 resolution. (800) 632-4636. See Oct. 1998, page 102.
Graphics Accelerator Matrox Millennium G200	**The new graphics champ. Blazing-fast 2-D and 3-D in one affordable card.**	$149, 8MB RAM, 1,600 by 1,200 resolution. (800) 361-1408. See Sept. 1998, page 92.

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The P817 XtremeMonitor™: So Powerful,

It Benches 360MHz

The P817 XtremeMonitor: Power and Speed

ViewSonic,® the market leader in Display Technology,™ does it again with our new P817 XtremeMonitor. This well-built 21" (20.0" viewable) monitor is incredibly strong and fast, making it the best performance display available for high-end CAD, document imaging and other applications where absolute precision is required.

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VIDEO HARDWARE continued

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
3-D Game Card Diamond Multimedia Viper V550	**The 3-D card of choice for hard-core gamers. Its 2-D performance isn't bad either.**	$199, 16MB SDRAM, 128-bit nVidia Riva TNT chip. (800) 468-5846. See Nov. 1998, page 93.
Multimedia Accelerator ATI All-in-Wonder Pro	**The future of PC graphics: a high-speed 3-D accelerator, TV tuner, and video-capture card in one.**	$169, 8MB SGRAM. (905) 882-2600 ext. 8226. See Mar. 1998, page 198.
Video Capture Pinnacle Systems Studio 400	**Edit your camcorder footage and make digital movies in record time with this low-priced hardware-software combo.**	$229, 16MB RAM, 30MB disk space (150MB to edit a one-hour movie). (888) 484-3366. Stay tuned.
Presentation Projector In Focus LP425	**It's better than a mobile movie theater. Take your sizzling presentations on the road with this 6.8-pound wonder.**	$5,999 list price, 800 by 600 SVGA resolution, 700 ANSI Lumens, 6.8 pounds. (800) 294-6400. See July 1998, page 94.

COMMUNICATION HARDWARE

Greed Is Good What you really want is a private T1 line. The next best thing is the Hughes DirecPC 2.0 satellite (see page 247).

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
High-Speed Fax Modem 3Com U.S. Robotics 56K Faxmodem	**The fastest way to get the Net over analog phone lines. Also available with USB.**	$129 for internal, $149 for external, 56Kbps, dual x2 and V.90 support. (800) 342-5877. See Jan. 1998, page 193.
Desktop Videoconferencing PictureTel Live200	**Just like being there—without all the costs and hassles of business travel. It's your best bet for powerful videoconferencing.**	$1,295, H.320-compliant. (800) 716-6000. See Jan. 1998, page 199.
ISDN Adapter 3Com Courier I-modem	**Digital? Analog? The choice is yours with this tried-and-true hybrid. Splurge for the external version with LCD feedback.**	$260 internal, $299 external, V.90 and ISDN. (800) 638-3266. Stay tuned.
LAN Adapter 3Com Fast EtherLink XL PCI TX 10/100 Network Interface Card	**Moving to Fast Ethernet but don't know when? Hedge your bets with this 10/100 network card.**	$89, 10Mbps or 100Mbps. (800) 638-3266. See Jan. 1998, page 194.
PC Card Modem 3Com Megahertz 56K Global Modem PC Card	**Notebook doesn't have a modem? Get the best with this 56K model.**	$269, V.90 56Kbps, Type II. (800) 638-3266. See Sept. 1998, page 214.
PC Card LAN Adapter Xircom CreditCard Ethernet 10/100+Modem 56	**Connect to your notebook or network at either 10Mbps or 100Mbps, and go online at speeds up to 56Kbps.**	$340, PC Card Type II slot, RJ-45 and RJ-11 jacks, upgradable to 56K standard. (800) 438-4526. See Jan. 1998, page 194.

DESKTOP APPLICATIONS

Office 2000 Watch Get all the details about Office 2000, plus tons of tips, from Woody Leonhard's free newsletter, Woody's Office Watch (www.wopr.com).

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Software Suite Microsoft Office 97	**The best collection of apps you'll find in one box. Don't forget to download the OSR-2 update at www.microsoft.com.**	$599 for Professional Edition ($349 for upgrade), Windows 95, 98, or NT. (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1998, page 206.
Word Processor Microsoft Word 97	**The standard for businesses everywhere. WordPerfect fans should check out Corel's WordPerfect Office.**	$339, Windows 95, 98, or NT 3.51 or later, 8MB RAM (16MB for NT). (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1997, page 87.
Spreadsheet Microsoft Excel 97	**It's a one-horse race and guess who's winning? Even Lotus's upgrade of 1-2-3 can't unseat this business favorite.**	$339, Windows 95, 98, or NT 3.51 or later, 8MB RAM (16MB for NT). (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1997, page 87.

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CDW 125116

3Com U.S. Robotics

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CDW 107570

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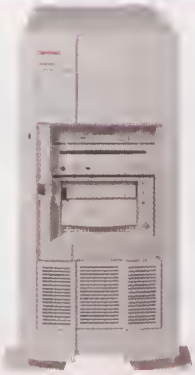

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A-List *continued from page 66*

DESKTOP APPLICATIONS continued

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Database Microsoft Access 97	**Lotus's $105 Approach 97 is easier to use, but Access 97 lets you publish live data to the Web. It's also faster.**	$339, Windows 95, 98, or NT 3.51 or later, 12MB to 16MB RAM. (800) 426-9400. See Mar. 1997, page 171.

FINANCE SOFTWARE

Expert Duo The two best reasons to get your financial house in order: Intuit Quicken Deluxe 99 and Microsoft Money 99.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Personal Finance Manager Intuit Quicken Deluxe 99	**Pay bills online, track your finances, and plan your retirement with this update. Money users have a new version as well.**	$60, Windows 3.1, 95, or 98, 8MB RAM, 14.4Kbps modem, CD-ROM drive. (800) 446-8848. Stay tuned.
Business Accounting Intuit QuickBooks Pro 6.0	**So easy you can do it yourself. Check out a QuickBooks seminar at www.quickbooks.com/training.**	Starts at $219 for a single user, Windows 95, 98, or NT 4.0. (800) 446-8848. See Oct. 1998, page 118.
Tax Software Intuit TurboTax Deluxe	**Remember those new tax laws? Time to see what they really mean. Coming soon: a new and improved TurboTax.**	$50, Windows 3.1, 95, or 98. (800) 446-8848. See Feb. 1998, page 103.

NETWORK SOFTWARE

The Road Ahead Waiting for Microsoft Windows NT 5.0? Check it out for yourself by grabbing a beta at www.microsoft.com/windowsnt5.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Network Operating System Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0	**Tempted by Linux? Does it have all the applications, service, and support you'll need? Until then there's NT.**	$809 for NT Server with five clients. (800) 426-9400. See Aug. 1998, page 198.
Groupware Novell GroupWise 5.5	**Share projects, communicate, and work faster and smarter than ever.**	Starts at $718 for five clients, Windows 95, 98, or NT. (800) 453-1267. Stay tuned.
Small-Office Network Server Microsoft BackOffice Small Business Server	**Everything you need to set up network e-mail, an intranet, Web hosting, and network monitoring. It's easy too.**	$1,499 for five clients, 100MHz Pentium, 64MB RAM, 2GB hard disk space. (800) 426-9400. See Dec. 1997, page 122.
Group Contact Manager GoldMine Software GoldMine 4.0	**The smartest way for teams to track and share contacts, collaborate on sales leads, and close deals.**	$695 for five users, Windows 95, 98, or NT. (800) 654-3526. See Mar. 1998, page 124.
LAN Management Tool Intel LANDesk Management Suite 6	**You need your network to be reliable. Intel LANDesk lets you manage it properly.**	$50 per node for 1,000 nodes, Windows 95, 98, or NT. (800) 538-3373. See Apr. 1998, page 110.

PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY SOFTWARE

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Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Contact Manager Symantec ACT 4.0	**Don't worry about downtime. There isn't any with this easy-to-use organizer, scheduler, and contact keeper.**	$200, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 8MB RAM. (800) 441-7234. See May 1998, page 120.
Document Manager ScanSoft Pagis Pro 2.0	**Clean off your desk: Pagis Pro makes it a snap to scan, file, edit, annotate, and search photos and documents.**	$99, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 24MB RAM. (800) 584-6843. See Nov. 1998, page 116.

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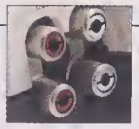

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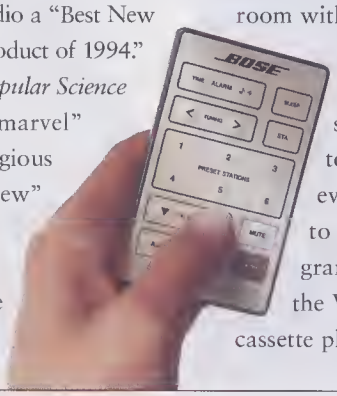
Operate the radio from across the room with the credit card-sized remote control. Set six AM and six FM stations, and switch between them at the touch of a button. You can even bring great Bose sound to recorded music, TV programs, or movies by connecting the Wave radio to your CD or cassette player, TV, or VCR.



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PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY SOFTWARE continued

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Project Manager Microsoft Project 98	**Expert-level project management via the Web—no advanced degree required.**	$499, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 20MB to 40MB hard disk space. (800) 426-9400. See Dec. 1997, page 166.
Scheduler Microsoft Outlook 98	**You want easy? Check your day—meetings, tasks, and new messages—from a single window. Plus superb e-mail.**	$109, Windows 95, 98, or NT, Internet Explorer 4.0. (800) 426-9400. See Feb. 1998, page 124.

REFERENCE AND ENTERTAINMENT CDs

Total Solution Handle all your money, tap into the ultimate reference on disc, and get down to some music at the end of the day.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Business Reference Intuit Quicken Home and Business 98	**If home is your office as well as your castle, this is the perfect software for your personal and business finances.**	$90, Windows 95 or 98. (800) 446-8848. See Oct. 1998, page 139.
Home Reference Microsoft Encarta 98 DVD-ROM Reference Suite	**Get this end-all reference collection of Bookshelf, Encarta, and an atlas on a single DVD disc.**	$130 ($109 for CD-ROM version), Windows 95 or 98. (800) 426-9400. See July 1998, page 134.
Game Simon & Schuster Interactive Starship Titanic	**Douglas Adams, author of the Hitchhiker's Guide series, brings his absurd humor to an adventure game.**	$35, Windows 95 or 98. (888) 793-9972. See Aug. 1998, page 128.
Entertainment Magix Entertainment Music Maker V	**There's more than entertainment in this music maker. It brings daydreams *and* business presentations to life.**	$50, Windows 95 or 98. (888) 866-2449. Stay tuned.

GRAPHICS SOFTWARE

It's a Snap Intuitive tools and versatile effects are just the beginning with the revamped version of MGI PhotoSuite. Great Web smarts too.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Presentation Graphics Microsoft PowerPoint 97	**Get your point across with a few well-done slides, or show them more with links to Microsoft Office documents.**	$339 ($109 upgrade), Windows 95, 98, or NT 3.51, 8MB to 16MB RAM. (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1998, page 214.
Personal Desktop Publisher Microsoft Publisher 98	**The fastest way to publish your own pages without cracking a software manual.**	$99 ($79 upgrade), Windows 95, 98, or NT, 8MB to 12MB RAM, 24MB hard disk space, (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1998, page 217.
Professional Desktop Publisher Adobe PageMaker 6.5	**Make your professional-quality documents look their best—in print or on the Web.**	$895 list price, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 8MB to 16MB RAM, 26MB hard disk space. (800) 422-3623. See Jan. 1998, page 217.
Business Graphics Microsoft PhotoDraw 2000	**Microsoft's all-in-one photo editor, designer, and illustrator will give your promotional materials an edge.**	$149, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 16MB RAM (32MB recommended). (800) 426-9400. See Nov. 1998, page 114.
Personal Photo Editor MGI PhotoSuite II	**Is it a browser or a photo editor? It's both. Grab images off the Web effortlessly, and apply effects with a mouse click.**	$50, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 32MB RAM, 80MB hard disk space. (888) 644-7638. See this issue, page 128.
Professional Photo Editor Adobe Photoshop 5.0	**The best digital darkroom adds long-awaited color management and selective undo features.**	$649, 90MHz Pentium, Windows 95, 98, or NT 4.0, 32MB RAM, 80MB hard disk space. (800) 492-3623. See June 1998, page 81.
Illustration Software Adobe Illustrator 8.0	**The top free-form professional illustration software gains smarter tools in version 8.0.**	$375, $129 upgrade, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 32MB RAM, CD-ROM drive. (800) 685-3587. See Oct. 1998, page 116.

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A-List

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TOOLS AND UTILITIES

Just In Hot on the trail of Windows 98, here come some of the first utilities to make it work right. Plus software fix-it tools everyone should own.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Windows 98 System Utility Symantec Norton SystemWorks	**Your very own IS staff in a box. Get this bundle of great utilities, including Norton Utilities, pcAnywhere, and AntiVirus.**	$99, Windows 95 or 98, 32MB RAM, 198MB hard disk space. (800) 441-7234. Stay tuned.
Windows NT System Utility Symantec Norton Utilities 2.0 for Windows NT	**The NT user's answer to Norton Utilities 3.0. Keep your system humming with this complete set of tools.**	$99, Windows NT 4.0, 16MB RAM. (800) 441-7234. See June 1997, page 130.
Antivirus Software McAfee VirusScan 4.0	**Nix viruses before they nix your data. Automatically scans without late-night scheduling hassles.**	$49 (free trial version available), Windows 95 or 98. (800) 338-8754. Stay tuned.
OCR Software Caere OmniPage Pro 8.0	**Never retype again. OmniPage converts scanned pages into editable text or publishes them to your Web site.**	$499 ($99 for upgrade), Windows 95, 98, or NT, 16MB RAM, 33MB hard disk space. (800) 736-5735. See Nov. 1997, page 172.
File Utility Mijenix PowerDesk Utilities 98	**Forget Windows Explorer, even in Win98. This is how God meant files to be handled. With zipping, copying, viewing, and more.**	$40, Windows 3.1, 95, 98, or NT, 8MB RAM (16MB for NT), 19MB hard disk space. (800) 645-3649. Stay tuned.
Remote-Control Software Traveling Software LapLink for Windows 95	**Keep your notebook and desktop PCs on speaking terms: Sync files via a cable or dial your desktop from the road.**	$150, Windows 95 or 98, 8MB RAM, 7MB hard disk space. (800) 343-8080. See Jan. 1997, page 156.
Application Development Tool Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0 Professional Edition	**Visualize better custom apps. This version adds dockable toolbars and the ability to edit multiple projects at once.**	$549, Windows 95, 98, or NT 4.0, 76MB to 200MB hard disk space. (800) 426-9400. See Sept. 1998, page 109.

WEB BROWSERS AND UTILITIES

Upgrade Fever Watch for betas of IE 5.0 and Navigator 5.0 to arrive before year's end. Make room on your hard drive—you'll want both.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Web Browser Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.01	**Get top-notch browsing, support for standards, file management, and a raft of add-on freebies—all at no cost to you.**	Free, Windows 95, 98, or NT. (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1998, page 117.
Internet Utility Novasoft SpamKiller 2.02	**Stop spam before it stops you with this sophisticated and customizable utility.**	$30, Windows 95, 98, or NT, POP3 or MAPI e-mail account. www.spamkiller.com. See Oct. 1998, page 129.
Newsgroup Reader Microsoft Outlook Express	**Hooked on Usenet? Then get the best newsgroup reader the Net has to offer. It's free too.**	Free, Windows 95, 98, or NT. (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1998, page 117.
Security/Encryption Network Associates PGP for Personal Privacy 5.5	**If only Bill and Monica had used PGP. Keep your secrets to yourself with this personal encryption utility.**	$39, public-key cryptography, digital signatures. (408) 988-3832. See Oct. 1997, page 172.

WEB SEARCH ENGINES AND SERVICES

Face-lift for AOL The most popular ISP now offers a slicker interface. If you haven't received a disc in the mail, download a copy at www.aol.com.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Search Engine Wired Digital HotBot	**If it's out there, you'll find it with HotBot.**	Free, www.hotbot.com. See Jan. 1998, page 238.
Web Accelerator Web 3000 NetSonic	**Accelerate your surf sessions with this Net freebie. Or go wild and get the Pro edition for just $30.**	Free, works with any browser. (425) 836-3000, www.web3000.com. Stay tuned.

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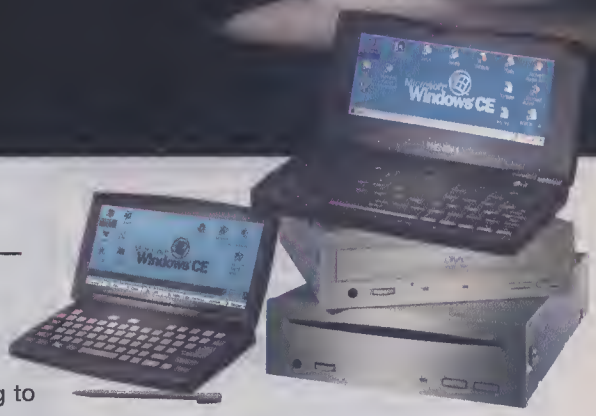

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WEB SEARCH ENGINES AND SERVICES continued

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
National Online Service America Online	**You've got too much mail and AOL can help. New antispam tools and an interface update are worth the wait.**	$21.95 per month for unlimited access, $9.95 per month for unlimited AOL access. (800) 827-6364. See Jan. 1998, page 238.
National Internet Service Provider UUNet Technologies	**Great customer support. Decent service rates. And best of all, no busy signals. What more could you ask for?**	$30 per month for 25 hours, $300 and up per month for Web hosting. (800) 488-6384. See Jan. 1998, page 240.
News Service Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition	**One of the few subscription-based sites worth paying for.**	$49 per year, $29 per year for *Wall Street Journal* subscribers. www.wsj.com. See Jan. 1998, page 240.
Financial Service E*Trade	**Still paying for your broker's expensive suits? Cut commission costs with E*Trade.**	$14.95 per trade for up to 5,000 shares. (800) 387-2331, www.etrade.com. See Jan. 1998, page 242.

WEB COMMUNICATIONS

Fast Track Finally, DSL or cable arrives in your area. Make it pay for itself by saving big with Internet phones, faxing services, and videoconferencing.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Internet E-mail Microsoft Outlook Express	**Download the new security fix for e-mail with attachments: www.microsoft.com/ie/security/?/ie/security/oelong.htm.**	Free, Windows 95, 98, or NT. (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1998, page 117.
Internet Phone Microsoft NetMeeting 2.1	**Make your connections better than ever. Get the newest audio and video drivers at www.microsoft.com/netmeeting/corp/.**	Free, Windows 95, 98, or NT, www.microsoft.com/netmeeting. (800) 426-9400. Stay tuned.
Internet Fax FaxSav Internet Suite of Services	**No way to print on the road? Fax yourself the document instead, and it'll be hand delivered by room service.**	Free for software, 15 cents per page for domestic faxes. (800) 828-7115. See Sept. 1997, page 188.
Internet Videoconferencing White Pine Software CU-SeeMe 3.1	**Hold face-to-face meetings without breaking out the breath mints.**	$79, $69 download at www.cuseeme.com. (800) 241-7463. See Jan. 1998, page 237.

WEB DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Run Your Business in Office? Use it to create your Web pages too with FrontPage 2000. Now with more hand-holding wizards and easy menus.

Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*
Web Publisher Microsoft FrontPage 2000	**What? No home page? Get FrontPage 2000. It's the fastest and easiest way to build a site.**	$149, Windows 95, 98, or NT 4.0. (800) 426-9400. See this issue, page 143.
Web Server Software Microsoft Internet Information Server 4.0	**If you've got Windows NT, you've already got the best Web server around—it's IIS 4.0, and it's free with Windows NT 4.0.**	Free for NT Server users, Windows NT 4.0, 486 CPU, 16MB RAM. (800) 426-9400. See Jan. 1998, page 246.
Site Management Utility Tetranet Software Linkbot 3.6	**Never apologize for a broken link or an outdated site again. Clean up your act and your site without breaking a sweat.**	$250, Windows 95, 98, or NT. (888) 245-5550. See Jan. 1998, page 242.
Commerce Server Microsoft Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition	**Move your boutique from Main Street to the entire world with Microsoft's all-you-need commerce suite.**	$3,499, Windows NT 4.0, Internet Explorer, FrontPage. (800) 426-9400. See June 1998, page 98.
Web Animation Software Macromedia Flash 3	**Want to jazz up that dead-end site with a little animation? Do it yourself with this easy, inexpensive gem.**	$299, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 486 CPU, 16MB RAM. (800) 945-9075. See Jan. 1998, page 244.
Java Development Symantec Visual Café for Java 2.5	**Build custom Java apps on your lunch hour.**	$300, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 24MB RAM, 35MB hard disk space. (800) 441-7234. See Jan. 1998, page 244.

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2. Micron's customers are really satisfied — just ask them. In fact, the influential readers of industry bible *PCWeek* ranked Micron desktops #1 in total customer satisfaction.‡‡ And *Home PC* readers voted Micron #1 in providing the industry's best service and support.

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"Micron's support policies are first-rate, with a three-year parts and one-year labor warranty and 24-hour toll-free phone support seven days a week."

- *PC World*, "Best Buy," August '98

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Micron Systems:
Over 100,000 deployed Micron desktops, notebooks & servers

Favorite Feature:
Price/power ratio

Purpose:
Help maintain US security and freedom

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Tim Willits
Lead Map Designer, id Software
Creators of Quake & Quake II

Micron Systems:
Micron Millennia 400 desktops

Favorite Feature:
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Purpose:
Test mind-bending levels of Quake II and help create one of the coolest games ever

For The Whole Story:
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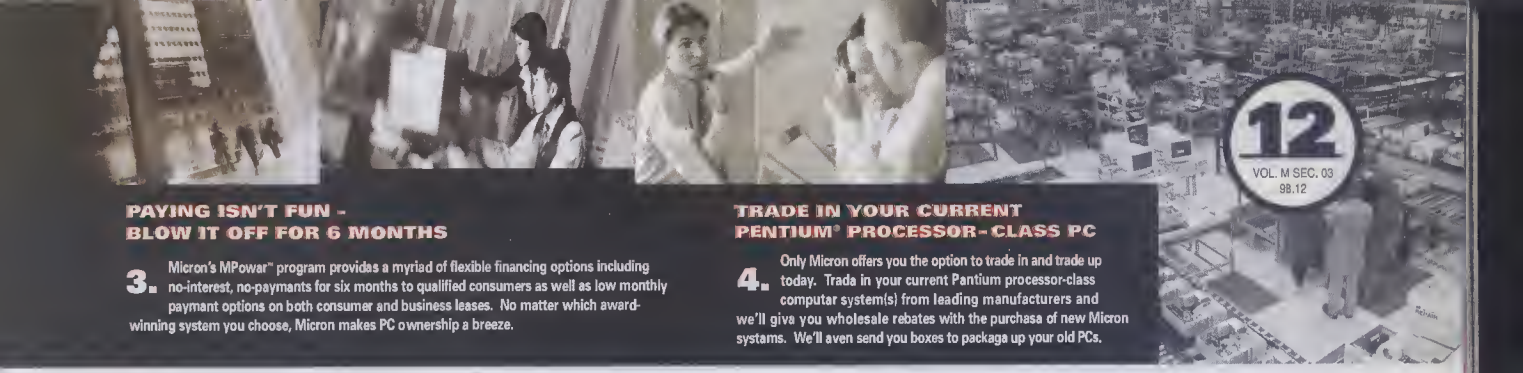
◊◊TechRefresh lease prices are based on a 36-month lease and are available to business customers. Businesses can qualify for 60-day same-as-cash and individuals for 6-month same-as-cash programs. If purchase advance and related charges are not paid in full within 60 days from purchase date for business or within 180 days from purchase date for individuals, finance charges will be assessed from purchase date. APR varies and is 17.65% as of 8/25/98 with a minimum finance charge of $1.00. Term financing is available to individuals for home or business use. PowerXchange accepts trade in of most major computer brands. Please call for details and the latest qualified brand list. Cash rebates are based on the average wholesale value of your PC per the Orion Blue Book, or other source chosen by Micron, adjusted for condition at trade-in.
A non-refundable up-front freight charge applies for participation in PowerXchange to cover cost of return packaging and processing.



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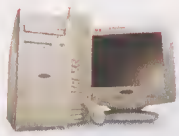

Model Name	Millennia C333	Millennia 350	Millennia 450 New!	Millennia 450 MAX New!	Millennia 450 MAX New!
Processor	Intel® Celeron™ processor 333MHz	Intel Pentium® II processor 350MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 450MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 450MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 450MHz
Cache	128KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache
RAM	32MB SDRAM	64MB 100MHz SDRAM	64MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM
Hard Drive	4.3GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	13.6GB Ultra ATA hard drive*	14.4GB 7200 RPM Ultra ATA hard drive*
Monitor	15" Micron 500Vx monitor (13.8" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display)	19" Micron 900Lx monitor (18" display)
DVD/CD-ROM	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	32X max speed CD-ROM drive	4.8X DVD-ROM drive
Modem	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**	3Com/U.S. Robotics 56K WinModem**
Graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 4MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 8MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 8MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	nVidia Riva 128, 8MB SGRAM 3D AGP graphics	Diamond Viper 550 nVidia TnT, 16MB graphics
Sound System	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound
Warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power™ limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
Software Included	Microsoft® Windows® 98 Microsoft Home Essentials Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Microsoft Outlook Microsoft Internet Explorer Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Microsoft Outlook Microsoft Internet Explorer Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Microsoft Outlook Microsoft Internet Explorer Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Microsoft Outlook Microsoft Internet Explorer Norton AntiVirus
Also Includes:	New MicroTower™ case Advent AV009 stereo speakers 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse® 3.5" floppy drive	New MicroTower case Advent AV009 stereo speakers 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive	New MicroTower case Advent AV009 stereo speakers 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive	Micron MiniTower case Advent AV009 stereo speakers 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive	Micron MiniTower case Monsoon MM1000 flat panel speakers w/subwoofer 100MB Iomega Zip Drive 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive
Price	$1,249 $44/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$1,499 $52/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$1,699 $59/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.** New Low Price!	$2,499 $87/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,899 $101/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.** New Low Price!
Upgrade to:	Upgrade to: 64MB SDRAM memory 6.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive 17" Micron 700Vx monitor (15.9" display) 100MB Iomega Zip drive	Upgrade to: 128MB SDRAM memory 10GB Ultra ATA hard drive 17" Micron Trinitron 700Tx monitor (16" display) 100MB Iomega Zip drive	Upgrade to: 128MB SDRAM memory 13.6GB Ultra ATA hard drive 19" Micron 900Lx monitor (18" display) 4.8X DVD-ROM drive	Upgrade to: 100MB Iomega Zip drive Monsoon MM1000 flat panel speakers w/subwoofer 19" Micron Trinitron monitor (18" display)	Upgrade to: 256MB 100MHz SDRAM Microsoft Natural Keyboard Elite
Price	$1,545 $54/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$1,932 $68/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,232 $78/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.** New Low Price!	$2,866 $100/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$3,214 $112/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.** New Low Price!

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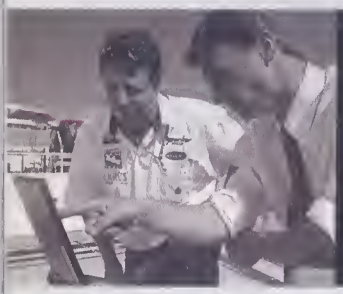
AMY ALCORN, MD

Pediatrician
System: Micron TransPort TREK
Favorite Feature: Brilliant Display
Purpose: Online Medical Research
For The Whole Story: www.micronpc.com



BOB PARKER

Owner/Founder Parker Motor Sports
Dominant Indy Race Car Team
Systems: Micron TransPort TREK Notebooks/
Millennia Desktops
Favorite Feature: Speed — Of Course!
Purpose: Telemetry between Indy Car and Pit Crew
For The Whole Story: www.micronpc.com

TREK ²

New! 300MHz
14.1" XGA TFT display
64MB SDRAM
3.2GB hard drive (removable)
DVD-ROM drive
Just $2,999

PENTIUM® II PROCESSOR POWER, AGP GRAPHICS, DVD AND A 14.1" DISPLAY AT BREAKTHROUGH PRICING

Experts and industry pundits all agree that Micron makes some of the world's best notebooks. Our product lines have won the coveted *PC Magazine* Editors' Choice award along with a myriad of other prestigious awards. And the new TransPort® TREK™ is no exception. *PC World* ranked the new TransPort TREK the #1 budget notebook available today††. And with a Pentium II processor 300MHz, AGP graphics, optional DVD and a gigantic 14.1" display, the TransPort TREK² is one of the best desktop replacements you can buy. Call Micron today and get a TransPort TREK² custom configured to your specific needs direct from the factory at unbelievably low prices.

"The TransPort TREK is the Fastest Budget Notebook We've Run Through Our Mill."††
***—PC World*, Ranked #1, "Best Buy," April '98**

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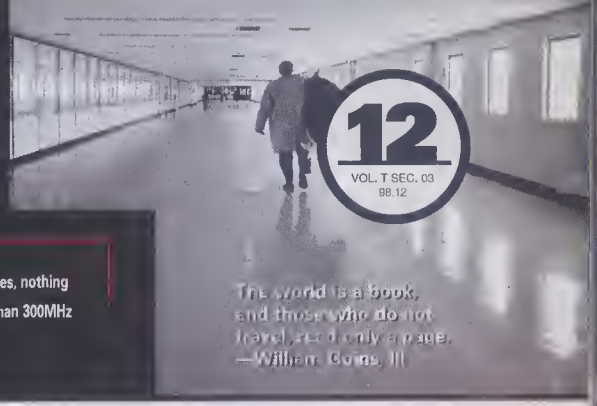
TechRefresh lease prices are based on a 36-month lease and are available to business customers. Businesses can qualify for 60-day same-as-cash and individuals for 9-month same-as-cash programs. If purchase advance and related charges are not paid in full within 60 days from purchase date for business or within 180 days from purchase date for individuals, finance charges will be assessed from purchase date. APR varies and is 17.65% as of 8/25/98 with a minimum finance charge of $1.00. Term financing is available to individuals for home or business use. PowerXchange accepts trade in of most major computer brands. Please call for details and the latest qualified brand list. Cash rebates are based on the average wholesale value of your PC per the Orion Blue Book, or other source chosen by Micron, adjusted for condition of trade-in.

A non-refundable up-front freight charge applies for participation in PowerXchange to cover cost of return packaging and processing.

Clients Don't Come To You



Work hard, but leave time for some major goofing off. And with a DVD-ROM drive and 3.5" floppy included, whether it's games or work, you'll have access to it all.

Don't be afraid to hug your notebook. Sometimes, nothing is more comforting to the weary road warrior than 300MHz of mobile desktop-replacing power.

Now Featuring Brilliant 14.1" Display! DVD-ROM drive!

Model Name	TREK² 233	TREK² 233	TREK² 266	New! TREK² 300
Processor	Intel® Pentium® II processor 233MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 233MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 266MHz	Intel Pentium II processor 300MHz
Cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache	512KB L2 pipeline burst cache
RAM	32MB EDO DRAM	64MB SDRAM	64MB SDRAM	64MB SDRAM
Hard Drive	3.2GB hard drive (removable)✧	3.2GB hard drive (removable)✧	3.2GB hard drive (removable)✧	3.2GB hard drive (removable)✧
Monitor	12.1" SVGA TFT display	13.3" XGA TFT display	14.1" XGA TFT display	14.1" XGA TFT display
Extra Storage	3.5" floppy disk drive (dedicated bay)	3.5" floppy disk drive (dedicated bay)	3.5" floppy disk drive (dedicated bay)	3.5" floppy disk drive (dedicated bay)
DVD/CD-RDM	24X CD-RDM drive (dedicated bay)	24X CD-ROM drive (dedicated bay)	24X CD-RDM drive (dedicated bay)	DVD-RDM drive (dedicated bay)
Graphics	4MB AGP graphics accelerator	4MB AGP graphics accelerator	4MB AGP graphics accelerator	4MB AGP graphics accelerator
Sound System	Built-in stereo speakers & microphone	Built-in stereo speakers & microphone	Built-in stereo speakers & microphone	Built-in stereo speakers & microphone
Warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty	5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty
Software Included	Microsoft® Windows® 98 System Wizard Mobile Client™† Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office Small Business Edition System Wizard Mobile Client™† Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office Small Business Edition System Wizard Mobile Client™† Norton AntiVirus	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office Small Business Edition System Wizard Mobile Client™† Norton AntiVirus
Also Includes:	Zoomed Video capable Li-Ion battery (dedicated bay) Microphone, stereo line-in/out jacks Touchpad pointing device CardBus ready S-Video & NTSC out; MPEG compatible Wavetable/3D Positional Sound 2-way fast infrared port 2 Type II/1 Type III PCMCIA slots 2-USB, parallel, serial, VGA, PS/2 ports	Zoomed Video capable Li-Ion battery (dedicated bay) Microphone, stereo line-in/out jacks Touchpad pointing device CardBus ready S-Video & NTSC out; MPEG compatible Wavetable/3D Positional Sound 2-way fast infrared port 2 Type II/1 Type III PCMCIA slots 2-USB, parallel, serial, VGA, PS/2 ports	Zoomed Video capable Li-Ion battery (dedicated bay) Microphone, stereo line-in/out jacks Touchpad pointing device CardBus ready S-Video & NTSC out; MPEG compatible Wavetable/3D Positional Sound 2-way fast infrared port 2 Type II/1 Type III PCMCIA slots 2-USB, parallel, serial, VGA, PS/2 ports	Zoomed Video capable Li-Ion battery (dedicated bay) Microphone, stereo line-in/out jacks Touchpad pointing device CardBus ready S-Video & NTSC out; MPEG compatible Wavetable/3D Positional Sound 2-way fast infrared port 2 Type II/1 Type III PCMCIA slots 2-USB, parallel, serial, VGA, PS/2 ports
Price	$1,799 $63/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,299 $80/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,599 $91/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**	$2,999 $105/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.**

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intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

Micron™ notebooks are among the very best available. Our notebooks have been critically acclaimed by industry pundits and power users alike. And the TransPort TREK² is no exception. Call Micron today and order any of our award-winning notebooks custom configured to meet your specific needs.

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It's about more than just maintaining a network. Throw in responsibility for everything from explaining the secrets of "data packets" to a CEO who uses his notebook for solitaire to keeping the information pipeline for 100+ Web-surfing, e-mail dependent, hyper-busy co-workers up and running, then

MICRON AND MICROSOFT TEAM UP TO BRING YOU THE POWER OF WINDOWS NT®.

CRITICS RAVE ABOUT THE MICRON CLIENTPRO

"The Micron ClientPro 400 succeeds in providing an optimized LANDesk Management Solution and combines it with top performance at a good price."

— *PC Magazine*
June 30, 1998

"Micron ClientPro provides "gracious plenty" for corporate IS and small-business buyers alike...This Windows NT 4.0 workhorse comes ready to network, with a preinstalled 3Com EtherLink LAN adapter card and Intel's remote control software for system monitoring."

— *PC World*
November '98

If you're looking for complete network solutions, or simply need to upgrade your current network, consider Micron™ ClientPro® managed PCs and Micron NetFRAME® servers. Network-ready right out of the box, packing the power of the Intel® Pentium® II processor 450MHz, and built on industry standards, the ClientPro effortlessly puts more manageable power in your office. And if you're looking for a reliable and expandable server, it would be tough to beat Micron's NetFRAME servers running with the powerful new Intel Pentium II Xeon™ processor.

"MICRON'S NETFRAME 3100 GIVES YOUR WEB CUSTOMERS WHAT THEY WANT BEFORE THEY CLICK AWAY."

— *PC Computing*, A-List Top Pick, Nov. '98

"MICRON'S DUAL-PROCESSOR... SERVER RUNS FULL SPEED AHEAD."

— *PC Computing*, A-List Editors' Choice

Since 1985 Micron's line of NetFRAME servers has been providing rock-solid, tireless service, becoming one of the most highly-regarded brands on the server market today. Combining advanced technology, superlative engineering and industry-leading service and support, Micron's award-winning line of NetFRAME servers continues to push the price/performance envelope and exceed user expectation.

Introducing the New Micron NetFRAME 6200

PC WORLD BEST BUY — ClientPro CS 400 Nov '98

PC Computing THE A LIST — Best Web Server NetFRAME 3100 Nov '98

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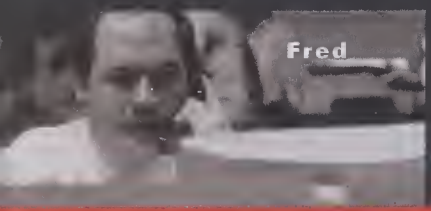
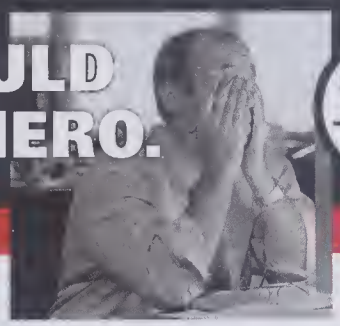
**TechRefresh lease prices are based on a 36-month lease and are available to business customers. Businesses can qualify for 60-day same-as-cash and individuals for 6-month same-as-cash programs. If purchase advance and related charges are not paid in full within 60 days from purchase date for business or within 180 days from purchase date for individuals, finance charges will be assessed from purchase date. APR varies and is 17.65% as of 8/25/98 with a minimum finance charge of $1.00. Term financing is available to individuals for home or business use. PowerXchange accepts trade in of most major computer brands. Please call for details and the latest qualified brand list. Cash rebates are based on the average wholesale value of your PC per the Orion Blue Book, or other source chosen by Micron, adjusted for condition at trade-in.

you're starting to scratch tha surface. Let's face it, when you're crawling around under someone's desk in a jungle of twisted cables because they want to see the dancing baby and you're the only one in tha office that understands that "hot-swappable hard-drives" aren't something dirty, the last thing you need is a server that's anything but flawless.



THEY SHOULD CALL ME HERO.



12
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WINDOWS NT FACT: Micron Was The First PC Company To Ship Windows NT In The Summer Of '94

New Rules. New Tools.™

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New!
ClientPro CS 450

Intel® Pentium® II processor 450MHz
512KB internal L2 cache
12BMB 50RAM
6.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive+
17" Micron 700Vx (15.9" display)
32X max speed CD-ROM drive
Diamond Viper 330 nVida, 4MB AGP video
64-voice PCI Wavetable sound
3Com 3C905 WOL 10/100 network card
5-year/3-year Micron Power℠ limited warranty
Intel LANDesk® Client Manager
Microsoft® Windows NT® Workstation 4.0
Norton AntiVirus
SMART II hard drive monitoring
Chassis intrusion detection
Fan, temperature, and voltage problem reporting
Virus detection reporting
Remote Wake Up capability
MiniTower case
3.5" floppy drive
104-key enhanced keyboard
Microsoft IntelliMouse®

$2,099 $73/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.※

New!
NetFRAME 2101

Intel Pentium II processor 333MHz
512KB internal L2 ECC cache
64MB ECC SDRAM
4GB Ultra Wide SCSI-3 hard drive+
32X max speed CD-ROM drive
5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
Dedicated server technical support, 7x24
1-year next-business-day on-site service†††
Intel LANDesk Server Manager
Emergency Management Port Console
Supports up to two Intel Pentium II processors
Intel 440BX PCI chip set
100MHz front side bus and up to 1GB memory support
Integrated Symbios PCI Ultra Wide SCSI-3 dual channel controller
Intel PRO/100+ Server Adapter
Integrated RAID upgrade support
5 expansion slots: 3 PCI, 1 ISA, 1 shared PCI/ISA
10 drive bays: 1 external 3.5", 3 external 5.25"
6 internal 1.0" hard drive bays (54GB max.)
Integrated SVGA graphics 2MB
Microsoft mouse, 104-key enhanced P5/2 keyboard
3.5" floppy drive

$1,899 $66/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.※

NetFRAME 3100

Intel Pentium II processor 400MHz
512KB internal L2 ECC cache
64MB ECC 100MHz SDRAM
4GB Ultra Wide SCSI-3 hard drive+
32X max speed CD-ROM drive
5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
Dedicated server technical support, 7x24
1-year next-business-day on-site service†††
NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
Intel LANDesk Server Manager
Emergency Management Port Console
Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0 (10-user license)
Supports up to two Intel Pentium II processors
Intel 440BX PCI chip set
100MHz front side bus and up to 1GB memory support
Integrated Symbios PCI Ultra Wide SCSI-3 dual channel controller
Intel PRO/100+ Server Adapter
Integrated RAID upgrade support
5 expansion slots: 3 PCI, 1 ISA, 1 shared PCI/ISA
8 drive bays: 1 external 3.5", 2 external 5.25"
5 hot-swap redundant 1.0" hard drive bays
Integrated SVGA graphics 2MB
Microsoft mouse, 104-key enhanced P5/2 keyboard
3.5" floppy drive

$3,599 $116/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.※

New!
NetFRAME 6200
High-Powered Server For Fast-Growing Businesses

Intel Pentium II Xeon™ processor 400MHz
512KB integrated L2 ECC cache
12BMB ECC EDO DRAM
9GB U2W LVDS SCA 1" hard drive+
32X SCSI CD-ROM drive
5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
Dedicated server technical support, 7x24
1-year next-business-day on-site service†††
NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
Intel LANDesk Server Manager 6.0
Emergency Management Port Console
Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0 (10-user license)
Supports up to four Intel Pentium II Xeon processors
Options for 512KB or 1MB L2 cache Xeon processor
Intel 450NX PCI chip set
4GB ECC EDO support (16 DIMM sockets)
7 expansion slots: 6 PCI, 1 shared ISA/PCI
Integrated Symbios U2W LVDS dual channel controller
Integrated Symbios narrow SCSI controller
Intel PRO/100+ Server Adapter w/Adaptive Load Balancing and Adapter Fault Tolerence software
6 internal, hot-swappable hard drives bays
1 hot-swappable 400-watt power supply (upgradable to three w/redundancy)
Integrated SVGA graphics 2MB
3 external 5.25" media bays
Free-standing pedestal chassis standard (rack mount option available)
Emergency Management Port (EMP)
ICMB and cluster support
104-key Enhanced P5/2 keyboard
Microsoft mouse
1 parallel, 2 serial ports
3.5" floppy drive
• Add 3Com Gigabit EtherLink Network Interface Card for $800*

$6,999 $226/mo. TechRefresh Bus. Lease, 36 mos.※

THE NEW MICRON NETFRAME 6200 IS THE FIRST SERVER AVAILABLE ANYWHERE WITH 3COM'S GIGABIT ETHERLINK SERVER NETWORK INTERFACE CARD.

The 3Com® Gigabit EtherLink® Server Network Interface Card features full duplex 32/64-bit gigabit performance, providing instant relief from server bandwidth problems. And 3Com's DynamicAccesss® software optimizes network performance and adds intelligence to the server Network Interface Card.

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Great performance...easy to recognize, hard to duplicate.

21" 110 khz
$999 ESP

Winning as many awards as we have sets iiyama apart from the competition. And for good reason. All iiyama monitors, including our newest line of 21" CRTs are engineered to meet the highest standards of quality and performance, allowing the user to run the monitor at its highest specified performance and refresh rate.

Consistent quality is maintained because iiyama monitors come from our ISO 9001 certified factories in Japan. We don't outsource or OEM our monitors, so we can always be 100% certain that our high standards are met.

So for high performance at an unbeatable price... get the monitor that can't be duplicated.

	CRT Monitor Model/ Viewable Area	TCO	Dot Pitch/ CRT Type	Max. Horizontal Scan Rate	Max. Resolution	Est. Street Price
21"	**VisionMaster Pro 502** (19.5" VIS)	TCO '95	0.28mm/AG	110khz	1800 x 1440@74hz	$999
	VisionMaster Pro 501 (19.5" VIS)	TCO '95	0.28mm/AG	96khz	1600 x 1200@75hz	$939
	VisionMaster 502 (19.5" VIS)	TCO '95	0.27mm/dp	110khz	1800 x 1440@74hz	$999
	VisionMaster 501 (19.5" VIS)	TCO '95	0.27mm/dp	96khz	1600 x 1200@75hz	$939
19"	**VisionMaster Pro 450** (18.0" VIS)	TCO '95	0.25mm/AG	102khz	1600 x 1200@80hz	$699
	VisionMaster 450 (18.0" VIS)	TCO '95	0.26mm/dp	102khz	1600 x 1200@80hz	$659
17"	**VisionMaster Pro 400** (16.0" VIS)	TCO '95	0.25mm/AG	96khz	1600 x 1200@75hz	$498
	VisionMaster 400 (16.0" VIS)	TCO '95	0.26mm/dp	96khz	1600 x 1200@75hz	$459
	S702GT (16.0" VIS)	TCO '95	0.28mm/dp	96khz	1280 x 1024@85hz	$369
15"	**VisionMaster 350** (13.7" VIS)	MPR-II	0.28mm/dp	69khz	1280 x 1024@65hz	$239

	TFT/LCD Monitor Model	TCO	Pixel Pitch	Max. Horizontal Scan Rate	Max. Resolution	Est. Street Price
14.1"	**Pro Lite 36a** (with OSD)	TCO '95	0.279mm	62.5khz	1024 x 768@75hz	$899
	Pro Lite 36b (80° Viewing Angle)	TCO '95	0.279mm	62.5khz	1024 x 768@75hz	$1,129
15"	**Pro Lite 38a** (with OSD)	TCO '95	0.279mm	62.5khz	1024 x 768@75hz	$1,129
	Pro Lite 38b (with OSD, USB & Speaker)	TCO '95	0.279mm	62.5khz	1024 x 768@75hz	$1,179

PC WORLD 1998 WORLD CLASS
1998 VisionMaster 450

PC MAGAZINE Best of 1997
January 6, 1998 VisionMaster Pro 17

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Prices do not include shipping, handling and any applicable taxes. Specifications are subject to change without notice. As an Energy Star™ Partner, iiyama has determined that this product meets the Energy Star™ Guidelines for energy efficiency.
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PC Computing — May 1998 VisionMaster 450

CADALYST LABS — *Perfect Five-Star Rating* January 1998 VisionMaster 450 VisionMaster Pro 500

ComputerLife — *Perfect Five-Star Rating* November 1997 VisionMaster Pro 17

Performance & Technical Excellence March 1997 VisionMaster Pro 21

MW EDITORS' CHOICE — *Six Time Winner* Jan 1997, Feb 1997, March 1997, April 1997, May 1997, June 1997 VisionMaster Pro 21

PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE — October 7, 1997 VisionMaster Pro 17

CADALYST LABS 4½ STAR RATING — March 1997 VisionMaster Pro 21

PC WORLD — *Twelve Time Winner* July 1996, Jan 1997, March 1997, July 1997, Sept 1997, Jan 1998, March 1998, May 1998, July 1998, Sept. 1998 VisionMaster Pro 17 April 1998, August 1998 VisionMaster 450

Infolink 129 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

I Wish

OK, the stock market's in the toilet, the Asian contagion is turning all currency into mush, and it's hard to think about loading up on more material possessions while people in third-world countries are living in rags and eating dirt. But heck, it's Christmastime, and it's our right as Americans to get Our Fair Share of holiday loot. Besides, it's especially true with PC gizmos since this stuff changes so fast that the bright and shiny goodies we all craved last year now seem like dusty war surplus you'd find under a pile of rusted Studebaker parts in some backwater Bulgarian flea market.

There are all sorts of drool-inducing PC products I desperately need, like giant pulse-pounding flat screens from NEC and Silicon Graphics, or Roland's 3-D scanner and milling machine, an amazing pair of gadgets about as close as you can get to *Star Trek*'s transporter. Or Lexmark's gorgeous 12-ppm color laser. Or Toshiba's new Portégé.

(But if I had a wish that I knew would come true, would I squander it on digital gewgaws? Well, . . . world peace would be nice, and no more hunger or disease or airline food, but why waste it on anything less than eternal youth or maybe the absolute life-and-death power over every living thing?)

Still, while I'd happily tear the wrapping paper off the PC products above, what I really, really want are a few products I can't get or that don't exist yet. So here's my real Christmas list:

Fast pipes. Unfortunately, the likelihood that DSL will creep through the woods to my rural house is only a bit higher than the odds that the most popular baby name next year will be Slobodan. It took those telco morons eight months to pull plain old ISDN.

A laptop screen I can read outside instead of the washed-out, is-it-on-yet experience I have whenever I work on the back deck or raise the window shade on the plane.

Paul Somerson

Will **DSL ever reach** my home? Will next year's most popular baby name be **Slobodan?**

A PDA with a screen I can read at all that doubles as a phone and pager, so I can stop looking like a telephone lineman.

A wire trimmer. The back of my desk resembles a telephone switchboard, and hooking anything up means slashing through this cable kudzu on my knees with screwdrivers in each hand and a flashlight in my teeth.

In fact, no more wires, especially on the road. I want to get onto our network seamlessly from anywhere, without worrying about RJ-11s, PBXs, or wireless strap-ons that don't work in every city (or that don't work at all).

A monster flat screen that's both a killer monitor and TV. Why is this so hard to do?

A way to pay extra and get priority service on clogged Web servers. In too many cases it's choked servers rather than small pipes that slow things to a crawl.

A laptop battery that really lasts a whole cross-country plane flight playing DVDs all the way. How come Moore's Law doesn't apply here?

A voice-mail system that transcribes messages and merges them into my e-mail. And a secret code that gets me out of voice-mail jail instantly.

A device that generates a horrible ear-piercing screech into the phone and automatically activates whenever telemarketers call at home.

A search engine that actually works. When are these things going to find the stuff I want, instead of adding goofy gimmicks like lacrosse scores and gardening tips?

A business application that uses 3-D so we can justify all that fancy graphics hardware.

Truly new, easy, and exciting software of any kind. (We can always dream.)

A real file manager. Not the clunky toy provided with Windows.

An operating system that honestly sucks less. And doesn't crash, or make me jump through hoops just to do simple tasks.

No more government meddling. Keep their paws off our industry.

Real competition for Microsoft. What else can keep them honest?

E-mail somerson@zd.com

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

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oops, there's a call, gotta go.

EASY SET-UP, INCREDIBLY FAST CONNECTIONS, KILLER 24-HR. SUPPORT AND FLEXIBLE PRICING FROM $6.95/MO. INCLUDING $19.95/MO. FOR UNLIMITED ACCESS. WE ALSO OFFER BIG PREPAYMENT DISCOUNTS. OUR INTERNET SERVICES WERE DESIGNED WITH YOU IN MIND.

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Liar, Liar

Linda Tripp has nothing on most Americans for dishing dirt when they're pissed. But who'd have thought low-life tattling would become the Internet's biggest growth industry? Cybergossip, whoppers, and slurs now move billions of bucks. Did you hear the one about the United Airlines passenger who died from a heart attack because the crew took more than 30 minutes to acknowledge he was unconscious? United Airlines sure hopes you didn't. But there it is on www.untied.com, a site dedicated to exposing customer-service horror stories about the airline.

It's not the only Web site spewing vinegar. Consider a smattering of pages Yahoo pitches up when you search under *consumer opinion:* My Anti-Netscape Page, The Why Apple Macintosh Computers Are Worthless Homepage, Macy's Is an (Alleged) Criminal Organization, WalMartSucks.com, and Packard Bell Is Evil.

Below the Belt Granted, these pages are created and populated mostly by peeved customers, burned employees, crusading activists, and crazies. But with 148 million Net surfers capable of stumbling onto these sites—often unintentionally—we're talking leverage. It's one thing to give management an earful by way of a customer complaint. It's quite another to turn your gripe into an Easter Seals drive.

Pinstriped PR departments at corporations everywhere have been caught slack-jawed. A few have embarked upon seek-and-destroy missions. Rumored to be donating cookies to the O. J. Simpson victory party, Mrs. Fields Cookies was threatened with a national boycott. Ever protective of its profits, the dough dynasty hired eWorks to infiltrate the Net and rout the perpetrators. The rumors stopped. Denials ensued.

Even if the public-relations woes of big corporations fail to bring tears to your eyes, realize that You, Too, can get burned. Electronic message boards operated by Yahoo, America Online, The Motley Fool, and other services have become thinly regulated conduits for rumors, speculation, and outright falsehoods. True or not, the blather on these boards often manipulates the price of securities.

Taylor & Jerome

True or not, the **blather** on these boards often **manipulates** the price of **stocks.**

Participants on the hottest stock message boards don't have to identify themselves. The commentary they post lingers for months. The unsuspecting arrive to find heated, seemingly knowledgeable, round-the-clock discussions. Yet often as not, bandits lurk in their midsts.

Boosters, flimflam artists, and competitors with an agenda love to weigh in on these boards. They typically come disguised, guided by the ethical standards of squid. Last July, Source Media's shares nearly doubled in two weeks to $32.25 after a merger was talked up in Internet chat rooms. The company issued a perplexed news release saying it could not explain the activity—which sent the stock diving to $17 a few days later. When the smoke cleared, a few folks had slithered away with quite a wad.

Blabber works both ways, of course. Innocents surfing the Net for lawn furniture sometimes stumble across rumors about a stock that, used correctly, can be parlayed into riches. Last summer, Texas Instruments announced that it was selling its entire memory-chip operation to Micron. Although no one on Yahoo's investment site accurately predicted every aspect of the deal, members had pieced together the gist long before the announcement—and months before it reverberated on Wall Street.

Sleaze Patrol Needless to say, the SEC is not amused. Nor are growing leagues of companies whose reputations—and revenues—are sullied by online scuttlebutt. Last April, E*Trade officials blew the whistle on a prankster nicknamed Paris, who had posted a bogus-but-official-looking press release on a Yahoo Finance message board announcing lower-than-forecast earnings.

E*Trade has filed a complaint with the SEC—and a lawsuit. Itex Corporation, an investment firm in Portland, Oregon, recently filed an antidefamation lawsuit as well for nasty fibs floating around the Web. Trouble is, company officials aren't exactly sure who they're suing. The perpetrators are known only by their handles. So far, the lawsuit has only provoked more messages insulting the management, their spouses, their cars, and their pets. Now that hurts.

E-mail taylor&jerome@zd.com

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

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Ad Attack

I've been complaining about spam for a few years. But now there's an alternative form that we're starting to accept as normal. Web sites are selling spot ads all over the page, and this advertising litter has become a blight. Take Sidewalk.com. (Please!) Some years ago I stupidly thought it would be a good idea to sell space in public bathrooms. These spots would be susceptible to graffiti, which in itself would draw attention to the product and result in fantastic mind share. Then again, maybe we should have an advertisement shoved in our face every time we turn around.

Over the years publishers have realized that selling every square inch of a page for ad placement turns off readers. To get away with thick, ad-riddled magazines such as *Vogue* requires finesse. But even the fat magazines don't sell space on their covers or on the spine, as the Comdex catalog does, for example. Some trade publications sell any white space they can find. They take on a cheap quality.

Tawdry Come-ons Another type of dubious advertising is popping up in newsgroups, to the annoyance of the members. Some club or interest group forms, and within weeks becomes the target for spam-crazed sex sites posting hundreds of weird messages to lure suckers into checking out a Web site because "Bambi thinks you're cute" or "Debbi has something to show you."

While this type of spam advertising is recognized as such, a new version has emerged that is just as tawdry. This kind also has bogus postings, only they're found on various classified ad sites. It's a particular plague on the free classified sites and will kill them off. This includes the personals sites where many people are looking for someone to meet. As soon as the spammers can infiltrate the pay sites, they will inundate them too.

Most of the spam that shows up in mailboxes and newsgroups and classifieds is promoting either sex sites or multilevel marketing schemes. Much of it is hard to stop, although not impossible. Filters do eliminate spam mail. Newsgroups could as easily filter content if they weren't so typically libertarian about freedom of speech—as if this nonsense was what the Founding Fathers had in mind. Yahoo classifieds, for example, are riddled with spam. The personals are a particular embarrassment. There is no reason why Yahoo (and the many others who do nothing to stop this nonsense) can't clean up the mess—or they should eliminate classifieds altogether.

John C. Dvorak

Greed has wrested control of the Net, and there are no zoning laws to stop the **blight of crummy ads.**

It's time users rebelled against this epidemic to make sites stop selling ads all over the page. A nice banner across the top is the way all this got started. It was touch and go at first. There were complaints. Hackers made threats. Then it was shown that many good sites needed to make money to survive and the banner did it. From there some advertising experiments began. Greed has wrested control of the Net, and there are no zoning laws to stop the blight of crummy ads looking like something from the turn of the century when every country barn had an ad plastered on its side.

Commercial Killers In the early days of Prodigy, ads were so unsightly and offensive that blocking software was invented to eliminate them. Now a handful of companies are making similar software for the Web. They argue that this software eliminates ads to speed up access.

Ad servers do slow down the page service. And for most people the ads are not important. If the blocking software speeds up access, then a lot of people will see it as a benefit. While it will have no effect on static ads placed within the Web pages and served as part of the page, ad blocking software will have a profound effect on the monster sites that hope to rule the world. They all use ad servers to load those ads, and those servers can be blocked. All I can say at this juncture is that these guys are bringing it on themselves.

Advertising pays my salary in one way or another for everything I do. I like advertising. But I see nothing good coming from overdoing it and assaulting everyone who comes in contact with a Web page or a magazine or, heaven forbid, a bathroom door.

E-mail pccdvorak@zd.com

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

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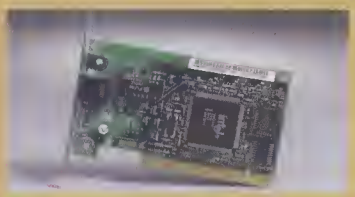

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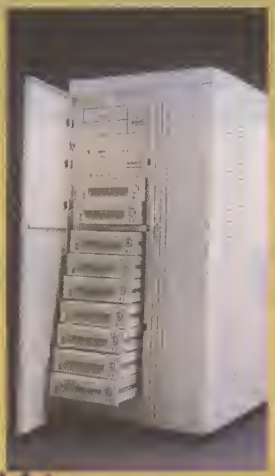

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- Upgradeable LVD RAID Part
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- System Management on Board
- 8MB AGP Video
- Sony 32x CD-ROM; Keyboard, Floppy, Mouse
- Tower Case 300 Watt

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- 128MB of Cache
  - Internal Temperature Status
  - Power Supply Status
  - Cooling Fan Status
  - Visual and Audible Alarm

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New!

Four Ways to Stay

SNEAK PREVIEW

Next time the flight attendant busts you on the jetway for toting one too many carry-on bags, tuck your superskinny notebook into the front of your pants, smile broadly, and proceed to your seat.

So petite and feathery are the latest notebook offerings, you won't even have to loosen your belt to accommodate them.

We got our hands on a foursome of the newest slim PCs. Two of them, superskinny notebooks from Sony and Toshiba, are so light that even when *combined*, the two devices weigh less than most notebook PCs. They're not the fastest machines to cross our test benches, but the performance trade-off is very minor compared with what you gain in portability. And unlike many of the 2-pound do-nothings cropping up, these machines have the features and components to get work done.

Two new ultraportables from Gateway and Micron add a bit more heft, but pack fast Pentium IIs, big screens, and all the multimedia hoo-ha you can shake a stick at. You may have trouble stuffing these in the front of your pants, but they'll hardly be a burden under your arm.

Muscle Midgets None is better suited to ultralightweight travel than Toshiba's $1,999 Portégé 3010CT. While Portégés have long resisted a subnotebook form factor because of usability compromises, the 3010CT displays precious few trade-offs. At 2.9 pounds and less than 1 inch thick, this superskinny notebook is a showcase of bantam-league design and engineering.

And don't think its slim package means it can't run alongside full-fledged PCs. Consider the Portégé's credentials: a 266MHz MMX Pentium CPU, 32MB of memory, a 4GB hard drive, and 3Com's 56Kbps fax modem. Even audio is included. The external floppy drive attaches via a proprietary port. An optional CD-ROM drive connects via a PC Card adapter. And a port replicator provides parallel, serial, SVGA, and PS/2 connectors.

Fingers fly on the QWERTY keyboard—no acrobatics required. The Tab, Enter, and right Shift keys are slightly undersized; the latter is easily confused with the adjacent cursor control. But you'll adapt. Your biggest gripe will be the lack of key travel and the spongy response. On the other hand, the space-saving pointing stick is far more accurate than a touch pad.

The machine's 10.4-inch active-matrix display is hospitable to Windows, though not exactly luxurious. No matter: For light productivity in a sub–3-pound package, the Portégé 3010CT is as good as it gets.

Blue Streak Sony's more expensive ($2,199) VAIO 505FX matches the Portégé almost feature for feature. Like the Portégé, it weighs 2.9 pounds and measures under 1 inch thick. It's also armed with a 266MHz MMX Pentium CPU, but the VAIO ups your memory bank to 64MB of RAM. (A 233MHz version with 32MB of memory is available for $1,999.) You also get a 4.3GB hard drive, a 56Kbps fax modem, a full-motion video-out port, and infrared. The port replicator gives you a full complement of connectors.

The VAIO's usability is both better and worse than the Portégé's. The floppy drive swaps with a CD (included)—or you can run it externally. While we were disappointed to find that the machine uses a small touch pad, in a crafty first for notebooks it doubles as a tiny digitizing tablet. You won't scribble engineering schematics or detailed organization charts with it, but it suffices for simple maps and diagrams. We wished the AC adapter were smaller, but overall, the machine's design is exceedingly refined.

Fire Ant Compared with the Portégé and the VAIO, Gateway's $2,999 Solo 3100XL seems positively elephantine. Of course, the Solo 3100XL, better known as the FireAnt, is actually only 5 pounds. And for just a little less portability you get a lot more capability, beginning with the machine's 300MHz Pentium II CPU and gorgeous 12.1-inch active-matrix display.

True to its name, Gateway's latest delivered a fiery performance, charging ahead of the pack in our benchmark tests. The FireAnt packs 64MB of memory, a 4GB

Toshiba Portégé 3010CT

★★★★★

Verdict: Proof that you needn't suffer on the road.

Pros: Svelte and feathery; excellent usability.

Cons: Extras cost . . . well, extra.

Features As Tested: 266MHz MMX Pentium, 32MB of RAM, 4GB hard drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 128-bit video accelerator with 2MB of RAM, 10.4-inch active-matrix display, external floppy drive, two PC Card slots.

$1,999 est. street price / Toshiba / (800) 867-4422 / *Enter 841 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARNOLD TIOSEJO

Guide to PC Computing's Ratings

Excellent *Market leader that offers exceptional performance* ..... ★★★★★

Good *Excels in many areas; a good buy* ..... ★★★★

Acceptable *Average for its class; a justifiable purchase* ..... ★★★

Poor *Out-of-date or substandard; offset by some positive features* ..... ★★

Unacceptable *Missing necessary features; avoid* ..... ★

Slim

hard drive, a DVD drive (nonswappable), and a 56Kbps fax modem. The floppy drive is external and there's only one PC Card slot. But there are no compromises where the keyboard is concerned. Its layout and response are first-rate: Cursor control keys drop below the right Shift key; you get full-size Tab, Enter, and backspace keys; and function keys are big.

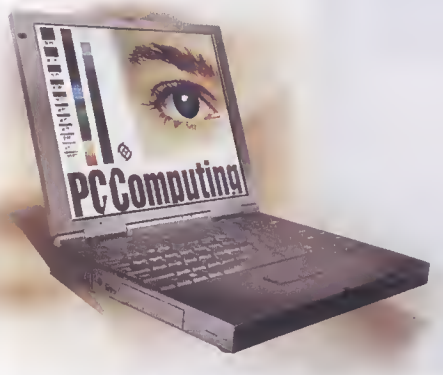
Speakers are integrated, but you won't want to use them; they're terrible. Even so, the machine makes a fine mobile presentation platform—beautiful to view and easy on the shoulders. And if you run Windows NT, this is the best traveling companion you'll find.

Go-go PC Micron's $2,998 GoBook2 gives you almost as much as the Solo in a box that weighs a mere 4.4 pounds (with floppy drive). Like the Solo, it sports a 12.1-inch active-matrix display and is powered by a 300MHz Pentium II CPU. It packs 64MB of memory and a 3.2GB hard drive.

There's no DVD option, but the 24-speed CD-ROM drive swaps with a floppy. Audio is integrated, and you get full-motion S-Video ports. Like the Gateway Solo, the GoBook2 makes a splendid presentation platform.

Its usability is good too, despite some rough edges. An optional battery slice connects to the bottom of the machine, effectively doubling charge life while adding less than a quarter inch to the machine's height and less than 2 pounds to its weight. The keyboard layout is fairly standard. The Tab and right Shift keys are slightly undersized. So are function keys. But everything else is normal. Kudos to the machine's three programmable quick-launch keys. Boo to the touch-pad pointer.

Make no mistake: The GoBook2 is a splendid traveling machine. It's just a little pricey. A modem costs $149 extra; the optional battery slice, $299. And we'd love to see a DVD drive (stay tuned). The GoBook2 should definitely be on your shortlist, but dollar for dollar, Gateway's Solo is a better deal. If you need something more portable than even an ultraportable, take a hard look at Sony's and Toshiba's superskinnys. Both are fully capable sheet-size wonders, though the Portégé 3010CT gets our nod by a nose. MARTY JEROME



Gateway Solo 3100XL

★★★★

Verdict: Fiery performance in a 5-pound package.

Pros: Loaded; big screen; fast CPU.

Cons: Pricey.

Features As Tested: 300MHz Pentium II, 64MB of RAM, 4GB hard drive, 2X DVD drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 256-bit video accelerator with 2.5MB of RAM, 12.1-inch active-matrix display, external floppy drive, PC Card slot.

$2,999 est. street price / Gateway / (800) 846-2000 / *Enter 842 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Micron GoBook2

★★★★

Verdict: A sub–5-pound dynamo.

Pros: Speedy CPU; big screen; light traveling load.

Cons: Pricey.

Features As Tested: 300MHz Pentium II, 64MB of RAM, 3.2GB hard drive, 24X CD-ROM drive, 256-bit video accelerator with 2MB of RAM, 12.1-inch active-matrix display, internal floppy drive, two PC Card slots.

$2,998 est. street price / Micron / (888) 634-8799 / *Enter 843 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Sony VAIO 505FX

★★★★

Verdict: The first ultraskinny portable and still a winner.

Pros: Innovative design; perfect portability.

Cons: Mixed usability.

Features As Tested: 266MHz MMX Pentium, 64MB of RAM, 4.3GB hard drive, 16X CD-ROM drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 128-bit video accelerator with 2MB of RAM, 10.4-inch active-matrix display, external floppy drive, PC Card slot.

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THe CIO IS iN THE hot seat as the executive

committee drills one department head after another on escalating costs. How are you going to [1] (get the newly acquired subsidiary onto our e-mail system)? How are you going to [2] (hold down your network administration head count) as you add hundreds of new users? How can you afford to [3] (roll out new apps to the whole company)? It's like the Spanish Inquisition, but the food is worse. Her stomach rumbles from the dry turkey sandwich and yuppie water served at the start of the meeting as one committee member wakes up long enough to ask about the [4] (Year 2000 problem) he saw on a CNN segment. "Not a problem, we have it covered," she replies. With an unforeseen compliment for completing the [5] (global supplier extranet) project, she is excused. Exiting, she smiles at the beleaguered marketing director, who is about to be skewered because the company's celebrity pitchman has just appeared on the cover of a supermarket tabloid.

THE [6] (BEST PARTS) OF HER MEETING WERE MADE POSSIBLE BY LOTUS.

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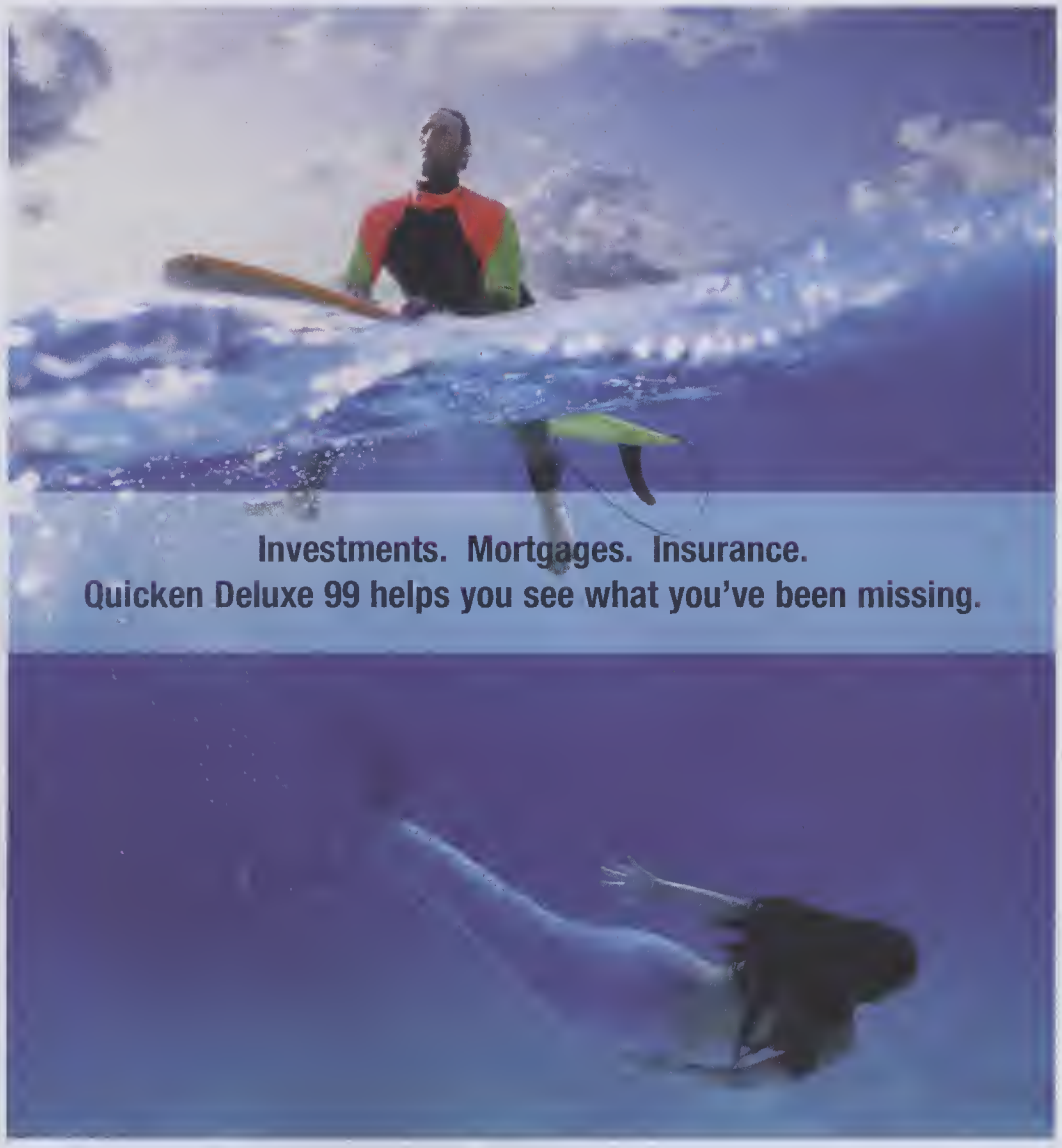

There are upgrades then there are, well, upgrades. With Quicken Deluxe 99, you can now see your financial situation in the context of the big picture. See how you're doing and, more importantly, see how you might be able to do even better. Quicken Deluxe 99 helps you seize control of your finances as you never could before.

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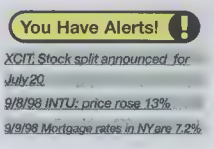
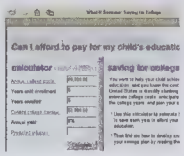


Be Alerted to Specific Ways to Do Better



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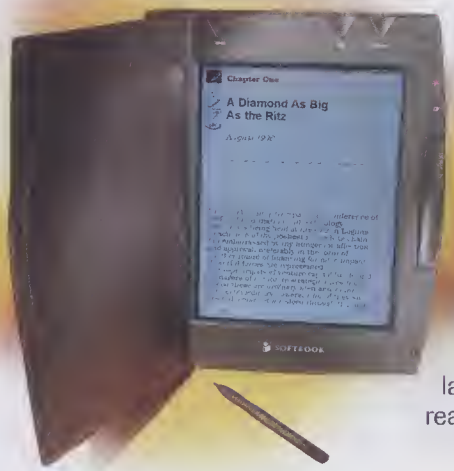
A New Chapter for Books

Do we really need electronic books? Sure, the Softbook Press Softbook and the NuvoMedia Rocket eBook are wondrous products, right out of science fiction. But we already have lightweight notebook and palmtop computers (not to mention actual printed paper) that transport text quite adequately.

Cover to Cover Both the Softbook and the Rocket eBook are marketed as reading-material distribution systems, aimed primarily at business readers who consume massive quantities of written materials.

The 2.9-pound Softbook is an extremely elegant package about the size of this magazine with a generous 6-by-8-inch screen and a padded leather cover. Text displays in high-contrast black on white (with graphics) and divides into screen-size pages. You never scroll; you "turn" preformatted pages forward or backward using a toggle bar under your right thumb. While reading, you can annotate or search the text and set bookmarks. It may be the most pleasant way to read electronic text yet invented.



Collector's Edition The elegant and intuitive Softbook is a stand-alone solution for the literate technophile, with a leather binding and large, easy-to-read pages.

To get fresh reading material, plug a phone line into the Softbook and the machine's internal modem connects to Softbook's online server. You can access a catalog of publications for sale as well as your personal Library (everything you've already purchased). Click to download a title to your Softbook—the process is jaw-droppingly simple.

Softbook was working out content partnerships with several book, magazine, and newspaper publishers as we reviewed the unit. Users are required to buy $20 of material per month for two years.

Pocket Book NuvoMedia's compact Rocket eBook is about the size of a paperback. Its smaller, 3-by-4.5-inch screen is also black and white and supports graphics—but isn't as easy on the eyes. Text isn't formatted as separate pages; it scrolls up and down, pushed by thumb buttons on the unit's "spine." You bookmark and highlight text with a stylus on the touch screen.

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Light Reading Download books from the Internet or documents from your PC and read anything, anywhere, with the 21-ounce Rocket eBook.

FILEBOX

Softbook

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Sets the standard for what an electronic book should be.

Pros: Bright, big pages; attractive design; no PC or modem needed.

Cons: Monthly subscription required.

$299 est. street price, plus at least $20 per month for content
Softbook Press
(650) 463-1800
Enter 845 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Rocket eBook

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Flexible tool for taking literature from the Net.

Pros: Downloads any material from a PC; weighs 21 ounces.

Cons: Smallish screen; scrolling text rather than pages.

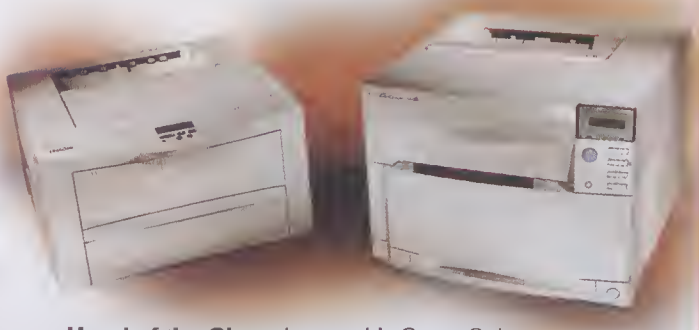
$499 est. street price
NuvoMedia
(650) 327-5110
Enter 846 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

No-Compromise Color Lasers

PREVIEW

Waiting for pages to emerge from a color laser printer is as exciting as watching paint dry—and takes almost as long. At least it used to. Lexmark's Optra Color 1200 boasts color printing speeds of 12 ppm, and Hewlett-Packard introduces a sporty look with its Color LaserJet 4500DN. This new HP printer doesn't have a 12-ppm color engine, but it cranks out monochrome documents with a 16-ppm engine at interpolated resolutions of up to 2,400 dpi.



Head of the Class Lexmark's Optra Color 1200 (left) delivers blazingly fast color laser output at up to 12 ppm, while HP's Color LaserJet 4500DN boasts 16-ppm text speeds.

Big Gains The Optra Color 1200 is clearly revolutionary. It's also huge. The design owes to the layout of the printer's engine—the toner cartridges, which each contain a print head, lie in a row. Rather than passing through the printer four times (once for each color), your documents get their colors one-by-one in assembly-line fashion. The result? Print speeds four times faster than with color laser engines of the past. Another design advantage: support for large-format, 11-by-17-inch output.

The features of HP's Color LaserJet 4500DN aren't as dramatic, but they include a new engine and a more modern look. The Color LaserJet doesn't boast the color print speeds of the Optra Color 1200, but its faster monochrome engine is a plus for everyday network printing.

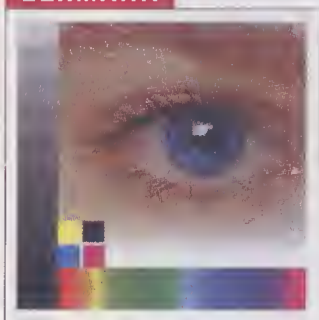
The 600-dpi base resolution on these two printers is equal, but each works some magic to raise the resolution you see to a higher level. The Optra Color 1200 offers 1,200 dpi, while HP's Color Resolution Enhancement technology elevates the Color LaserJet 4500DN's output to 2,400 dpi. In our photo output tests we preferred the LaserJet's pages, which were smoother than the Optra's. For presentations and images that don't have as much detail, both printers produce knockout documents. Text quality is nearly equal, though the Optra produces darker text that's slightly easier to read.

Speed Copier The Optra blazed past the LaserJet when printing a color presentation. It printed a 3-page Microsoft PowerPoint file in just over 30 seconds. Zoom! The LaserJet made up ground on shorter, text documents, outpacing the Optra by about 8 percent for a 10-page Microsoft Word file. Print a bigger (50-page) document, however, and the Optra zips ahead of the LaserJet by about 20 percent. The printers clocked nearly equal speeds when printing a photograph from Adobe Photoshop.

While prices for color lasers have plummeted over the past few years, the Optra comes in on the high side at $5,999 ($6,949 for the 1200n network version). The LaserJet's prices range from $2,499 for the barebones 4500 to $3,799 for the network-ready 4500DN.

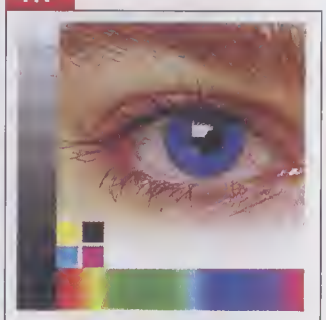
If you demand breakneck color speeds, you'll find that printing presentations has never been faster than with the Optra Color 1200. The Color LaserJet 4500DN has its own claim to fame with dazzling output, but 4-ppm color is just too pokey to put at the end of your high-traffic network. If color is what you're after, opt for the Optra Color 1200. KYLA K. CARLSON

LEXMARK



PC Computing Image Test

HP



PC Computing Image Test

Close-up With its 2,400-dpi resolution, Hewlett-Packard's Color LaserJet 4500DN gives you slightly smoother, more pleasing output than that of the Lexmark Optra Color.

FILEBOX

Lexmark Optra Color 1200

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: You've never seen color print this fast at this price.

Pros: Fastest color print engine in this price range; 11-by-17 support; 1,200-dpi output.

Cons: High list price; text printing is only 12 ppm.

$5,999 est. street price ($6,949 for 1200n)
Lexmark Int'l
(800) 539-6275
Enter 847 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Hewlett-Packard Color LaserJet 4500DN

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Cover all the color bases: sharp output, fast text, plus networking and duplexing support.

Pros: 2,400-dpi resolution yields gorgeous photographic output; 16-ppm monochrome engine; internal network card.

Cons: Only 4-ppm color; lacks 11-by-17-inch output support.

$3,799 est. street price ($2,950 for 4500N, $2,499 for 4500)
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 752-0900

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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Date book

Memo pad

To do list

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Heavy Hitters for the Road

Make room for the Big Berthas. The three latest notebooks from heavy hitters Dell, Compaq, and Hewlett-Packard are built to command attention.

All three are positioned as desktop PC replacements. But given their 8 to 11 pounds of traveling weight, they're really full-fledged desktop PCs with a yen for the occasional road trip.

Get Loaded None of these boxes leaves you wanting for performance. All three machines come outfitted with 300MHz Pentium II CPUs, 64MB of memory, and big 4GB to 8GB hard drives—ideal platforms for running Windows NT. Giant LCD screens and fast 3-D accelerators are also standard. And each notebook's hot-swappable drive bay accepts a medley of peripherals, including DVD drives, a second battery, and a second hard drive (Compaq and HP only).

Dollar for dollar, the best bet going is Dell's $3,699 Inspiron 7000. It sports a vast, 15-inch active-matrix display, giving you a viewable area equal to that of many 17-inch CRT monitors. Backlighting is consistent across the panel, and colors are bright and richly saturated.

The Inspiron proved our top performer, nosing ever so slightly ahead of the Hewlett-Packard OmniBook 7150 and the Compaq Armada 7800. It also delivered the second longest battery life. But its big screen notwithstanding, the Inspiron's usability trails that of the other machines. Its base weight is nearly 9 pounds with the combo double-speed DVD-floppy drive. The AC adapter is big and heavy, and the notebook comes with a touch pad instead of a pointing stick.

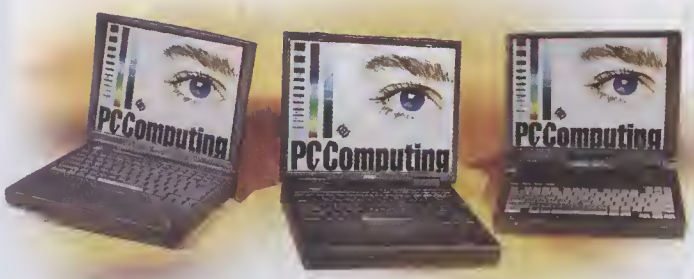
Even so, the full-featured Inspiron costs some $1,300 less than its competitors.

Carry That Weight The Compaq Armada 7800 is heavy too—well over 8 pounds. But this includes the AC adapter, which is integrated in the machine, and the DVD-floppy combo drive. The keyboard layout and response are superb, and there are four programmable quick-launch keys.

The 14.1-inch display isn't as big as the Inspiron's, but it provides plenty of real estate for presentations, while saving space and weight. The Armada's only glaring usability drawback: There's no wrist rest. But this is a quibble; the Armada's overall design is a league above the Inspiron's. Alas, so is its $5,599 price.

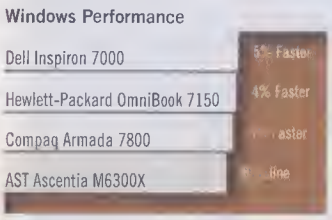
The $4,999 HP OmniBook 7150 isn't cheap either, but this notebook is quite refined. Like the Compaq Armada, the OmniBook sports a gorgeous 14.1-inch display—and it's backed by amazing video: MPEG-2 playback, S-Video out, and an 8MB AGP graphics accelerator. It also posted the longest battery life in our tests, lasting nearly four hours. Unfortunately, its 9-plus pounds of travel weight won't exactly put a smile on your face. Stay tuned for a slightly slimmer yet equally powerful OmniBook 4150 due out by the time you read this.

All three of these portly portables give you amazing amounts of power. The Dell Inspiron 7000 wins our endorsement by trimming the price, if not the weight, of its machine. MARTY JEROME



Big Guns Yes, they're heavy and expensive. But top-drawer offerings from Hewlett-Packard, Dell, and Compaq (left to right) showcase the best in modern notebook technology.

Photo Finish
Windows Performance



NOTE: WINSTONE 98 IS A SYSTEM-LEVEL, APPLICATIONS-BASED BENCHMARK THAT MEASURES A PC'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE WHEN RUNNING WINDOWS-BASED 32-BIT BUSINESS APPLICATIONS.

Barn Burners
All three of these notebooks are built to perform. While Dell's Inspiron was the fastest, the speed differences between the three were minimal.

FILEBOX

Dell Inspiron 7000

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: One of the best shows on the road.

Pros: Superfast performance; 15-inch screen; power to spare; merciful price.

Cons: Heft; coarse usability.

Features As Tested: 300MHz Pentium II, 64MB of RAM, 4GB hard drive, 2X DVD-floppy combo drive, 4MB of video RAM.

$3,699 est. street price
Dell
(800) 388-8542
Enter 848 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Compaq Armada 7800

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: A good reason to pitch your desktop PC.

Pros: Refined design; lots of power; gorgeous display.

Cons: Heft; price.

Features As Tested: 300MHz Pentium II, 64MB of RAM, 8GB hard drive, 2X DVD-floppy combo drive, 4MB of video RAM.

$5,599 est. street price
Compaq
Enter 849 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Hewlett-Packard OmniBook 7150

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: A connoisseur's presentation platform.

Pros: Blazing performance; first-rate video; fine usability.

Cons: Heft; price.

Features As Tested: 300MHz Pentium II, 64MB of RAM, 8GB hard drive, 2X DVD drive, 8MB of video RAM.

$4,999 est. street price
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 322-4772

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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Put Your Home LAN on the Web

It's OK to be afraid of the dark. The same goes for public rest rooms and any snack with *Jerky* in its name. But if you're afraid of hubs and routers, you're keeping your home network in the dark, cut off from e-mail and the Web. Shared Net access is a crucial feature of a modern home network, and hubs and routers are a means to this end. Thankfully, ZyXel's new Internet routers, the Prestige P100MH Analog Router and the Prestige P100IH ISDN Router, take the fear out of these networking ghoulies so you can effortlessly connect your home network to the Net. More than saving you time and frustration, however, these Internet routers save you cash.

No Aspirin Necessary The $329 Prestige P100MH offers a smart Internet solution for any small network by combining a 56Kbps modem with a four-port 10Base-T hub and a high-speed router. This lets your entire network share one modem for accessing the Net. Better yet, this means your entire network can also share one phone line and one Internet account, saving you a substantial chunk of change. Of course, 56Kbps of bandwidth is quickly whittled down when multiple users are online simultaneously. Luckily, you can preserve bandwidth by setting a time limit after which inactive users are automatically disconnected. And telecommuters will love the fact that the Prestige P100MH lets them remotely access any PC on the network.

Most important however, and unlike many networking solutions, the Prestige P100MH won't have you reaching for the aspirin during setup. The slick Prestige Web Configurator offers a graphical interface that leads you through the thicket of network hazards. Distributing IP addresses to all the clients on your network is a simple, multiclick operation: Plug in your ISP's information and you're good to go.

Digital Advantage If it's speed you're after, a single analog line isn't enough. The $329 Prestige P100IH is similar to the P100MH, except instead of a 56Kbps modem, this model is armed with an ISDN adapter. This lets you distribute 128Kbps of Net bandwidth across your network. And a digital line means absolute throughput—you really do get 128Kbps of bandwidth. On a 56Kbps analog line, by contrast, your chances of actually reaching the full 56Kbps are up there with your chances of winning the lottery.

The Prestige P100IH also puts to rest any fears you have about setting up an ISDN router. The Prestige P100IH comes with the same simple configuration software as its cousin, so installing this router is surprisingly easy. But while the setup wizard walks you through initial setup, if you happen to enter the wrong information the first time, going back to change it is tricky. We had to call tech support to get back on track.

If you're ready to step out of the dark and connect your home LAN or SOHO to the Net for the cost of a single ISP account, ZyXel's Prestige Internet routers present a superbly simple solution. JASON TOATES

FILEBOX

Prestige P100IH ISDN Router

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: ISDN Internet access for your home LAN.

Pros: Painless ISDN setup; 128Kbps of pure bandwidth.

Cons: If it's not right the first time, you better call tech support.

$329 est. street price (extra for ISDN installation)
ZyXel Communications
(800) 255-4101
Enter 850 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Prestige P100MH Analog Router

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Bringing the Internet to your home network has never been easier or more affordable.

Pros: Single-user account cuts down on ISP costs; allows for easy telecommuting.

Cons: 56Kbps isn't much bandwidth for a four-person network.

$329 est. street price
ZyXel Communications
(800) 255-4101
Enter 851 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Choose Your Weapon ISDN or 56Kbps? Either way, ZyXel's Prestige P100IH (left) and P100MH Internet routers provide Web access for your entire home network. They're smart, simple, and economical.

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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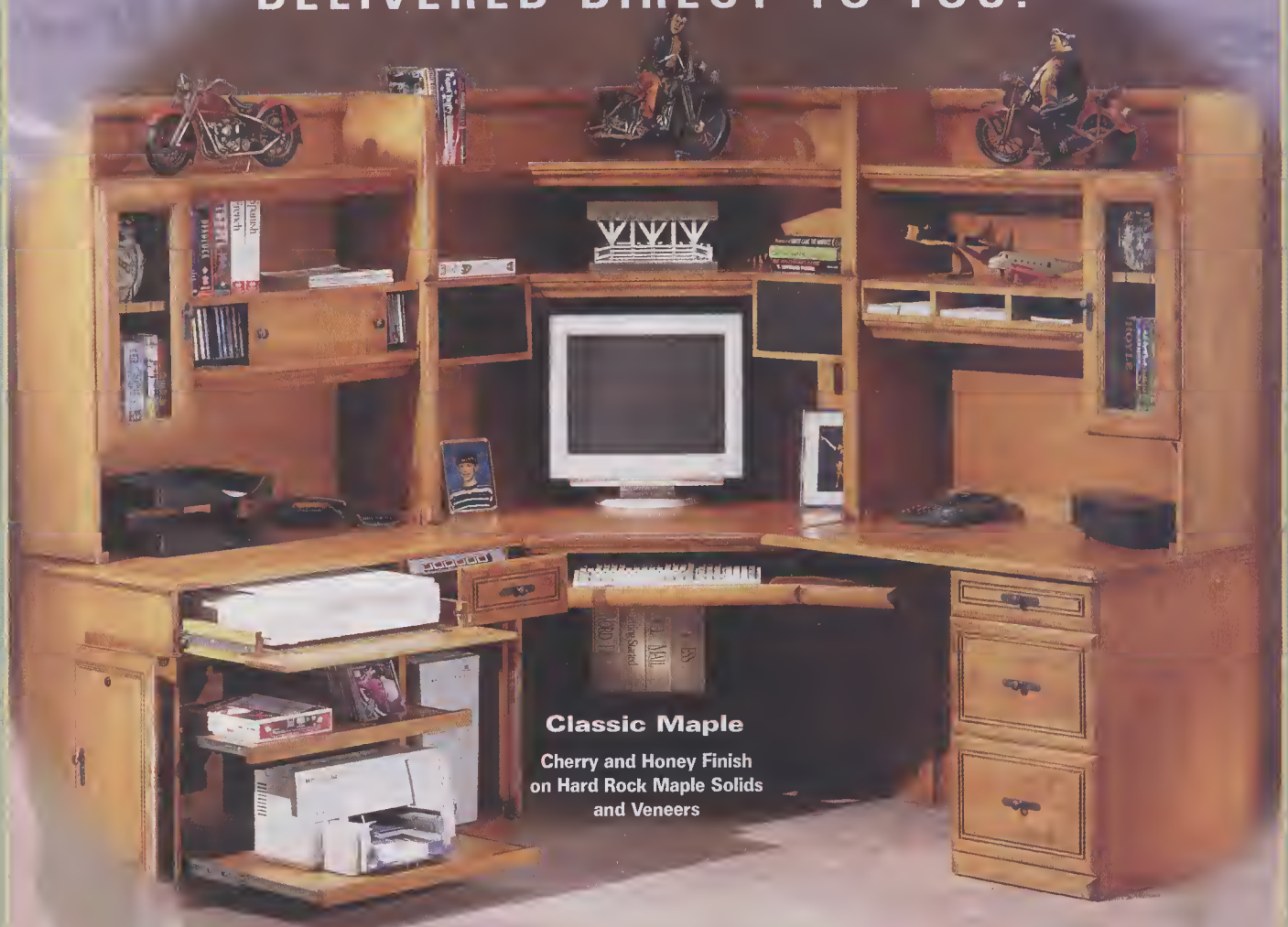

Classic Maple

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Cherry and Black Finish On Hardrock Maple Solids and Veneers

Mission Cherry Finish Oak Solids and Veneers

Shaker

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Affordable and Portable PII Power

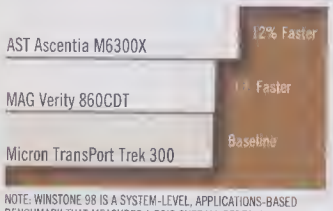
If you're looking for the ultimate travel companion, meet the 300MHz Pentium II notebook, the most powerful laptop available today. And while our first batch of Pentium II 300 notebooks were priced well over three grand (see "300MHz over Your Shoulder," October, page 86), all three of these portable powerhouses are ready to move for under $3,000.

Advantage, AST The AST Ascentia M6300X offers an impressive bundle of power and features. The notebook's screaming-fast performance was way ahead of the competition. It also proved the most energy-efficient, lasting 3 hours and 32 minutes—over an hour longer than its two competitors. Combine these traits with the Ascentia's $2,999 price tag and this system becomes quite seductive.

While it's a good half an inch thicker than the new breed of ultraskinny portables, the Ascentia's 6.7 pounds (not including floppy drive and power brick) make it a relative lightweight. Its ATI 3D Rage LT Pro 2X AGP accelerator with 4MB of video memory brings Quake matches to life.

300MHz and Counting Pentium II portables from AST, Micron, and MAG (left to right) have more horsepower than most desktop PCs did a year ago; and they're priced to move.

Portable PII Trio
Windows Performance



NOTE: WINSTONE 98 IS A SYSTEM-LEVEL, APPLICATIONS-BASED BENCHMARK THAT MEASURES A PC'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE WHEN RUNNING WINDOWS-BASED 32-BIT BUSINESS APPLICATIONS.

Road Runners AST's 300MHz Pentium II Ascentia was the clear performance leader in the pack—and its battery lasted an hour longer than the competition's.

There's also a 56Kbps PC Card modem and a beautiful 13.3-inch active-matrix screen (though an extra inch of display would be nice).

Low-Cost Charmer Though MAG Portables' Verity 860CDT stocks many of the same goodies as the Ascentia, it lagged behind AST's powerhouse in several key areas. For starters, its poor-contrast screen is a real turnoff. Ditto the surprisingly loud fan that kicks on—and stays on—whenever you plug in the unit's power brick. The Verity also posted average performance and battery life results. And what, no modem?

The notebook is not entirely without charm. It includes a big, 4GB hard drive, a 24-speed CD-ROM drive, and a carrying case. It weighs in at a reasonable 6.9 pounds (minus floppy drive and power brick). Another plus: The battery has an external gauge that shows how much charge remains. Alas, the company doesn't include any software beyond Windows 98. The Verity 860CDT's rock-bottom $2,799 price is the lowest of its PII 300 ilk, but that's not enough when an extra $200 gets you the Ascentia.

Trek Sequel Micron's hulking $2,899 TransPort Trek2 300 loses points for portability, but compensates by being the best equipped of our 300MHz notebooks. Consider its incredible 14.1-inch active-matrix screen, which puts some 15-inch CRT monitors to shame. The 3.2GB hard drive is slightly smaller than the competition's, but it comes loaded with Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition and Norton AntiVirus. Plus, this is the only portable here with internal floppy *and* CD-ROM drives (though this explains the TransPort Trek2's 7.6-pound frame).

The TransPort Trek2 proved the slowest of the trio, and its midrange battery life mandates keeping a spare cell handy. Still, it sports two USB ports, a video-out jack, and a comfortable keyboard, making the TransPort a viable desktop replacement. For tight budgets, the Verity is the least expensive 300MHz notebook you'll find. But for true notebook power at a decent price, the Ascentia is the ideal. RICK BROIOA

FILEBOX

Ascentia M6300X

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Superfast and super-long-lasting 300MHz notebook at an excellent price.

Pros: Blazing performance; ultralong battery life; game-friendly graphics acceleration.

Cons: Limited bundled software; could be a little skinnier.

$2,999 est. street price
AST Computer
(800) 876-4278
Enter 852 at
www.pccomputing.com

TransPort Trek2 300

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Who needs a desktop PC? Micron's TransPort Trek2 300 has it all.

Pros: Enormous, gorgeous screen; internal floppy and CD-ROM drives; plenty of expandability; Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition.

Cons: No external volume control; huge footprint; below-average performance.

$2,899 direct price
Micron Electronics
(888) 634-8799
Enter 853 at
www.pccomputing.com

Verity 860CDT

☆☆☆

Verdict: The bargain shopper's 300MHz notebook.

Pros: Big hard drive; cool surround-sound audio; low price; case included.

Cons: Dim screen; no modem; no software bundle; middling performance and battery life.

$2,799 direct price
MAG Portables
(800) 533-7515
Enter 854 at
www.pccomputing.com

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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Business Lease◊: $76/Mo., 36 Mos.
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★ *Upgrade to a 6.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive, add $199.*

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$2649

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$2999

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- 3D Surround Sound and Hardware Wavetable
- Intelligent Lithium Ion Battery
- Custom Leather Case
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- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition v2.0
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★ *3Com 10/100 Fast Ethernet Adapter, add $129.*

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Distortion-Free Flat Screens

Curves are cool if you're a swimsuit model or a sports car. When it comes to your computer monitor, though, curves are a nuisance. The four arcing corners of your screen are responsible for the annoying glare that greets you every morning. They also distort image geometry on your screen, stretching circles into ovals and spreadsheet tables into honeycomb grids.

Liquid-crystal displays, or LCDs, are flat, of course, and do away with the dreaded curvature of the screen; but they also ask you to shell out more dollars for less screen space. Two new monitors from Sony and Iiyama introduce a new alternative that promises the best of both worlds: giant CRT monitors with flat, distortion-free screens.

Look Sharp Iiyama's 19-inch Vision Master Pro 450 (left) and Sony's 21-inch MultiScan GDM-F500 aren't like the conventional CRT monitors you know. Both have perfectly flat glass tubes that eliminate image distortion and annoying glare.

Flat-out Fabulous Every aspect of the 21-inch Sony MultiScan GDM-F500 sparkles with elegant and intelligent design. When stared at head-on, the GDM-F500 is so flat you'll swear you're looking at an LCD. Its profile reveals a 19.1-inch depth, which, while nowhere near the slimness of an LCD, is still trim for a 21-inch monitor. You'll notice another design win at the back of the monitor: The power and VGA cables plug in vertically, clearing up a couple inches of space so you can push the monitor flush against a wall. The backside also boasts six BNC connectors, letting you hook up two computers to the display at once. Even the monitor's base goes the extra mile by providing four powered USB hubs.

We tip our hat to Sony's excellent onboard controls. Rather than overwhelming you with a confusing row of buttons, each representing various functions, the GDM-F500 sports a single joystick at the bottom right. You navigate a menu of onscreen controls (moiré, color temperatures, and so on) with this joystick as easily as when you're playing your favorite video game.

The image this monitor displays is just as beautiful as its packaging. A .22mm aperture grill pitch makes for a very sharp image. The display is capable of resolutions of 1,800 by 1,440 at 80Hz, though few graphics cards hit that resolution yet. We were most comfortable viewing images at 1,280 by 1,024 at a pleasant 100Hz. Since it uses a Trinitron tube, you get a brighter image at the cost of two visible lines stretching across your screen.

Improve Your Image Instead of a row of buttons for adjusting image quality, Sony gives you just one—a joystick-like device for navigating plain-English menus.

No More Curves Iiyama's Vision Master Pro 450 is equally flat, but its 19-inch screen is smaller than that of the MultiScan, and its $699 price tag is considerably cheaper. As you'd expect, the image is geometrically perfect, even at the edges of the screen. The .25mm dot pitch display renders 1,600-by-1,200 resolution at a flicker-free 80Hz. And since the Vision Master Pro 450 also uses aperture grill technology, these images are bright and colorful.

Like the MultiScan, the Vision Master sports both a VGA connector and BNC connectors. But the Vision Master lacks many of the design wins that distinguish the MultiScan. Its three onboard control buttons are confusing and frustrating to use. And to find out the monitor's current refresh rate, you're forced to delve deep into menus.

The Vision Master Pro 450 gives you all the benefits of a flat CRT at a price you can afford. If you've got the extra bucks, Sony's MultiScan is a best-of-breed monitor your eyes will instantly appreciate.

ALEXEI ORESKOVIC

FILEBOX

Sony MultiScan GDM-F500

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: A top-notch, 21-inch CRT monitor with a perfectly flat face.

Pros: Flat glass tube; clever design; excellent onboard controls.

Cons: Pricey, pricey.

$1,900 est. street price
Sony
(800) 352-7669
Enter 855 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Iiyama Vision Master Pro 450

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Flat-screen, 19-inch CRT that won't break the bank.

Pros: Affordable; flat glass tube delivers a crisp image.

Cons: Frustrating image controls.

$699 est. street price
Iiyama
(800) 394-4335
Enter 856 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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Infolink 153 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Space-Age Mouse

There's a rat's nest of cables growing behind your PC. You might not be able to eradicate it, but you can keep it from spreading to your desk. Logitech's new Cordless Wheel Mouse cuts down on cable clutter and roams your mouse pad with no restraints.

Load the mouse with the two included AAA batteries, plug the special receiver into your PC's mouse port, and hop on for the ride. The Cordless Wheel Mouse uses radio-frequency technology instead of infrared. This means the mouse works even when an object is blocking the line of fire to the receiver. When we surrounded the receiver with a towering wall of books, our trusty mouse continued to perform flawlessly.

The mouse's top-mounted, rubber scroll wheel lets you fly up and down Web pages, and also doubles as a third button. Thanks to Logitech's clever MouseMan software, you can set this third button to do things like summon your bookmarks or stop loading a Web page.

Southpaws will love the Cordless Mouse's ambidextrous design. It's equally at home under the grasp of a left or a right hand, and you can easily flip-flop the right- and left-click button functions.

Best of all, the Cordless Wheel Mouse's $60 price is about the same as its wired brethren's. If you're tired of constantly snagging your mouse cord on various desktop hazards, put your hand on the Cordless Wheel Mouse. ALEXEI ORESKOVIC

Break Away Logitech's Cordless Wheel Mouse gives you infinite slack, no wire snags, and a slick scroll wheel.

FILEBOX

Cordless Wheel Mouse

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: The ideal mouse—scroll wheel but no cord.

Pros: Wireless technology provides great response; ambidextrous design.

Cons: Batteries need replacing every six months.

$60 est. street price
Logitech
(800) 231-7717, (510) 795-8500
Enter 857 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Entrega Technologies 7 Port USB Hub vs. ADS Technologies USB Hub

No-Hassle USB Hookups

Still crawling behind your PC every time you want to plug in your USB camera? Time to get a USB hub. Tiny mouse-size devices, USB hubs let you easily connect multiple USB peripherals, like a scanner, printer, speaker, and keyboard, to any Windows 98 PC—without reaching behind your PC.

Entrega Technologies' $130 7 Port USB Hub fits in your hand and accommodates up to seven devices. You can even stack several of these hubs on top of each other, thanks to an ingenious slide and lock design. The hub's LED display tells you which ports are occupied and which ones are free. Entrega also sells a four-port version for $79.

You can't stack ADS Technologies' $89 four-port USB Hub. Even so, this low-price, low-profile hub is a cinch to install and a pleasure to use.

The ADS hub is a fine product if you're positive you'll never have more than four USB devices. For those who can't foresee the future, the stackable Entrega hub offers room to grow and an eye-catching look. ANDRÉ LEACH

Plug and Go USB hubs from ADS (left) and Entrega let you attach multiple USB peripherals to your computer.

FILEBOX

7 Port USB Hub

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: The deluxe USB hub.

Pros: Easy to set up; stackable.

Cons: What's not to like?

$130 est. street price
Entrega Technologies
(949) 859-8866
Enter 858 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

USB Hub

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Four USB ports in a jiffy.

Pros: Easy setup.

Cons: Not stackable; homely.

$89 est. street price
ADS Technologies, (800) 888-5244
Enter 859 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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Infolink 124 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Big-Screen Voodoo

Calling all Voodoo card owners: You don't have to play action games on tiny PC monitors anymore. Canopus's new T3D128DX card, called the WitchDoctor, connects to both your Voodoo card and your TV set so you can play your favorite games on the big screen. This $140 Riva 128 AGP card also makes a fine stand-alone 2-D/3-D accelerator.

Since no Voodoo cards currently feature TV-out ports, the WitchDoctor provides the only way to get Voodoo game play on your TV screen. You simply connect your TV's video cable to the back of the WitchDoctor and fire up your picture tube for great-looking, large-screen games.

And whether it's connected to a TV or a PC monitor, the WitchDoctor's DirectPath technology means your VGA signal no longer gets filtered through your Voodoo board. Canopus claims this prevents signal degradation, which we confirmed in our testing.

The WitchDoctor includes nice software tools that let you change brightness and contrast settings in the midst of a game. The Application Launcher toolbar lets you save screen settings for various games, then launch these optimized games with one button.

If you want to turn your Voodoo card into a dedicated living-room gaming system, the WitchDoctor is one surefire way to do it. MICHAEL MATHOG

Graphic Magic Connect Canopus's WitchDoctor directly to a 3DFX Voodoo card and your TV screen, or put it to work as a stand-alone 2-D/3-D graphics accelerator.

FILEBOX

Canopus T3D128DX WitchDoctor

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Get Voodoo game card performance on your TV—and a powerful 2-D/3-D card in the bargain.

Pros: Great graphics card; excellent utilities.

Cons: A bit difficult to connect to a Voodoo card.

$140 est. street price
Canopus
(888) 868-2533
Enter 860 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

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E-Mail Phones Home

Ah, the spork. Half spoon, half fork, and not particularly outstanding in either department—like some all-in-one devices that try too hard to be too many things. But technology convergence is yielding some truly useful products, including Casio PhoneMate's $149 IT-380 E-Mail Link telephone. The E-Mail Link is a solid speaker telephone and answering machine that also checks your e-mail account for new messages, so you don't have to boot up your PC.

Take a Message The $149 Casio PhoneMate IT-380 lets you place calls or check e-mail.

The configuration process is tedious, but no more so than with other Web-enabled devices. You enter your ISP account information via the telephone keypad, then program the E-Mail Link to log onto your account at preset times during the day. When the phone dials up your ISP, it automatically retrieves and displays sender names and headers (up to 60 characters in length) for up to 40 unread messages on the server. Judging from that information displayed on a small but adequate screen, you decide whether it's worth logging on via your PC to read the complete message.

You can program the E-Mail Link to check two accounts. The telephone unit is solid but would benefit from a cordless handset. And America Online subscribers are out of luck: The E-Mail Link supports only the POP3 standard. Still, once you're used to checking for e-mail without booting up your PC, you won't want to part with the E-Mail Link telephone. GORDON BASS

FILEBOX

Casio PhoneMate IT-380 E-Mail Link

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Got e-mail? Find out without booting up your PC.

Pros: Simple to operate; no more logging on just for spam.

Cons: Can't access America Online accounts or those behind a firewall; lacks cordless handset.

$149 est. street price
Casio PhoneMate
(310) 618-9910
Enter 861 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

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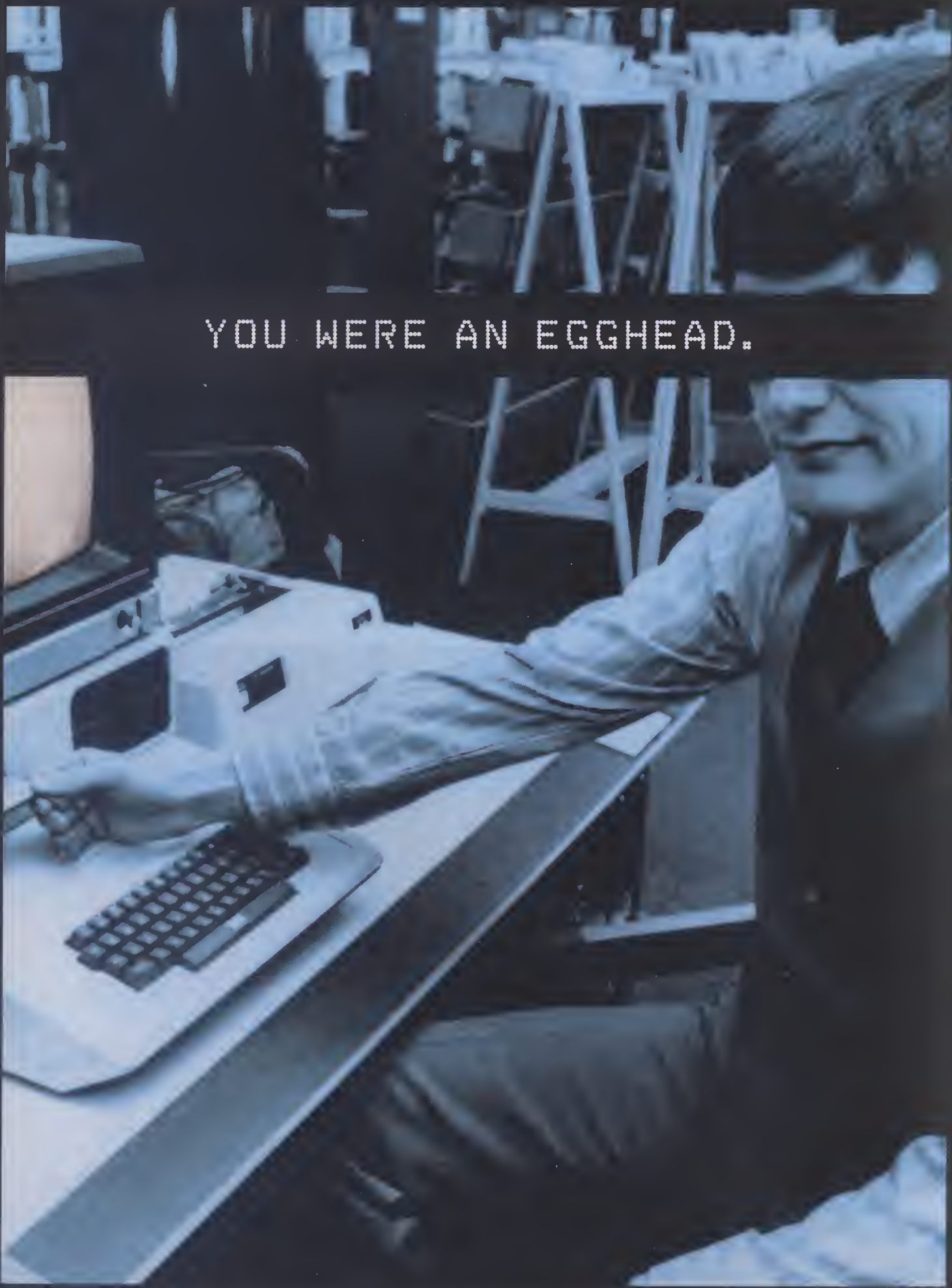
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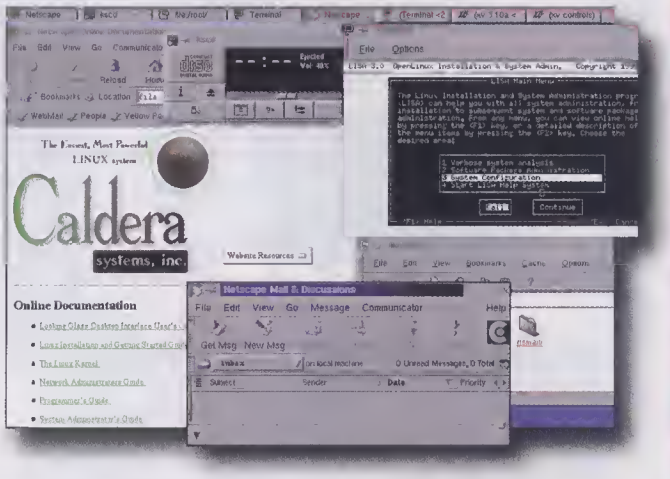
Infolink 262 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Real NT Alternatives

Common sense says you never discuss politics or religion in mixed company. But for small businesses considering Microsoft Windows NT alternatives, those topics seem inescapable; just listen to the noise surrounding freeware operating system Linux. We've put both topics aside to review two commercially supported versions, Caldera Systems' $59 OpenLinux 1.3 and RedHat Software's $49 RedHat Linux Operating System.

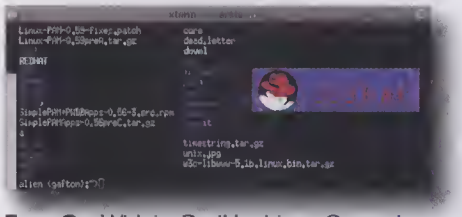
Both products support Intel CPUs and both add a handful of extras—including service and support—that you won't get with a freeware version of Linux. Abandoning Windows? Look before you leap. Linux suffers a dearth of third-party applications and isn't ready to roll out to everyone in your business, but the pro-Unix geeks in IS will love it.



Linux Comes of Age Caldera Systems' $59 OpenLinux 1.3 (above) and RedHat Software's $49 RedHat Linux Operating System make for interesting alternatives to Microsoft Windows NT, but neither is ready to roll out to everyone in your office.

Hat Trick In the early days of Linux, installation could be a mind-numbing chore. You had to know every detail of your system's hardware and hope that some savvy Linux user had already written the necessary drivers (or be prepared to write them yourself). But when you install RedHat Linux, the setup program automatically identifies your hardware. As with any Linux product, though, keep a list of installed hardware, including your video card, its chipset, and your monitor's resolution and refresh specs. You'll still need to enter some of the information yourself.

Once it's installed, RedHat Linux offers you a number of X Windows–based graphical administration tools for jobs like creating user accounts and configuring networks. You also get a copy of Netscape Communicator and a disc full of trialware and demos of other Linux products.



Easy On With its RedHat Linux Operating System, RedHat Software has attempted to make Linux as easy to install as possible.

OpenLinux 1.3 is like RedHat Linux in that it attempts to detect your hardware during setup. But where RedHat's version of Linux tries to shield users from some of the more obscure settings in Linux, Caldera's leaves them out in the open—good for veterans but not so hot for newbies. OpenLinux 1.3 does include a few nice touches, however. The installation program, for example, offers several predefined uses (as a text processing system or as a server) and lists the amount of disk space each requires. Unfortunately, it doesn't check to see if you actually have enough space free on your disk—neither does RedHat Linux—but it's better than flying blind.

Star Treatment OpenLinux 1.3 includes all of the perfunctory communications protocols and adds some useful extras like Star Division's Star Office, an integrated office suite with a word processor, spreadsheet, database, and more. Caldera also throws in a copy of the easy-to-use Netscape FastTrack Server for intranets and Web sites.

Despite attempts by RedHat and Caldera at simplification, their products are still Linux, which means frequent visits to the command line and a chance to get chummy with your favorite text editor. And if you've never used a Unix variation before, these trips will feel a lot like travel in a foreign country. Be sure to buy a Linux reference book with a good index before you hit the road, and it's wise to dabble with freeware Linux before you throw money at either of these commercial versions. CHRIS LINDQUIST

FILEBOX

Caldera OpenLinux 1.3

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Strong networking features meet a Unix look-alike.

Pros: Includes business suite and networking features.

Cons: Not quite as easy to install as RedHat Linux.

$59 est. street price
Caldera Systems
(888) 465-4689, (801) 765-4999
Enter 871 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RedHat Linux Operating System

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: The most likable Linux around.

Pros: Quick setup; nice selection of third-party extras.

Cons: Windows is still easier to install and use.

$49 est. street price
RedHat Software
(888) 733-4281, (919) 547-0012
Enter 872 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

Photo Editing Comes out of the Dark

SNEAK PREVIEW

A good photo editor is anything *but* a digital darkroom. After all, you can't put a lot of polish on photos if you're blindly grasping for tools and bumping into walls.

MGI has completely rebuilt its PhotoSuite digital photo editor with this principle in mind. The result, PhotoSuite II, incorporates every image-editing tool you can dream of in an amazingly easy-to-use $50 package.

Split Personality MGI PhotoSuite II is both a photo editor and a browser. You can cull the Web for images and drop them directly into the photo library strip for editing and touch-ups.

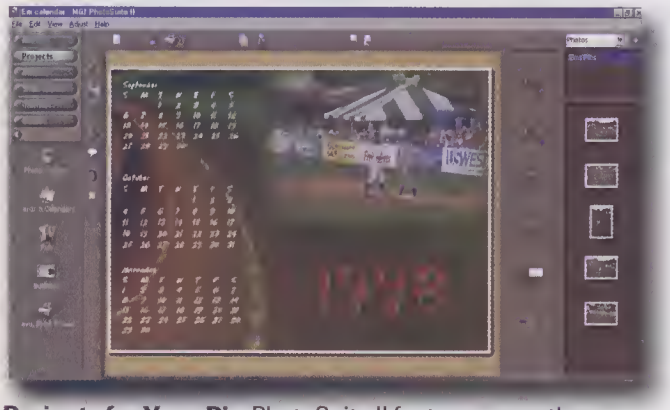
Like a Browser PhotoSuite II steals its look and feel from browsers. In fact, it is a browser. PhotoSuite II is built on top of Internet Explorer 4.0, its components are ActiveX controls, and the display is DHTML. In addition, you flip through your documents using Back and Forward buttons, and you can access the Web directly from the program's display. (Relax, Netscape Navigator users: Although PhotoSuite II demands IE on the PC—and adds it if it's not already there—your preferred browser remains the default for all other Internet tasks.) But the real advantage of this browser-based approach is the way it works with the Web. To copy a picture from any Web page, for example, you simply drag it into a PhotoSuite II album.

Like any entry-level photo editor worthy of consideration, PhotoSuite II automates mundane chores, saving you precious time and effort. It cleverly adjusts a photo's brightness and contrast, and retrieves pics directly from several digital cameras (including Agfa, Kodak, and Olympus models) without the extra step of going through the TWAIN driver. To use any of PhotoSuite II's 500 or so project templates—from calendars and posters to Web pages and greeting cards—simply drag and drop thumbnails into them. It's that easy. And some tools operate so intuitively that you'll wonder why they haven't always worked this way: Just drag the zoom tool onto a photo and pull it up or down with your mouse to zoom in or out.

Touch Up PhotoSuite II fixes all sorts of photographic faux pas. A red-eye remover gets rid of the ruby spots within pupils; handy crop guides trim pictures to size; and the cut-out tool deftly separates part of a picture from its background. Of course, you'll find a slew of traditional image-editing tools—brush, eraser, flood fill, and others—and you'll love the full palette of special effects, which includes stained-glass effects, funhouse-style morphs and warps, and more. Once your photos are up to snuff, print them to paper—laying out multiple copies on a single sheet of photo paper is a snap here—send them off as e-mail, or even upload them to online service bureaus such as Kodak's PhotoNet (PhotoSuite II also retrieves photos from these services). In the meantime, PhotoSuite II organizes photos in searchable albums.

The program shows just a few quirks. The most glaring is MGI's claim that PhotoSuite II will run on a low-powered 133MHz PC with just 16MB of RAM. Only a masochist would attempt this. Editing 24-bit, high-res digital images on a machine that slow is worse than a sharp stick in the eye. You'll want a fast Pentium II machine with at least 32MB of memory.

Hardware quibbles aside, PhotoSuite II works wonders with digital photographs. It's easily the brightest darkroom of the year. GREGG KEIZER



Projects for Your Pix PhotoSuite II features more than 500 fun project templates—including an entire collection of calendar formats—that need just a simple drag-and-drop from you to finish up.

FILEBOX

MGI PhotoSuite II

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Best under-$100 photo editor on the market, bar none.

Pros: Couldn't be easier to use; jam-packed with templates and effects; great at grabbing pictures from cameras and the Web.

Cons: Contrary to the modest system requirements printed on the box, the program needs a powerful PC with plenty of RAM—32MB or more.

$50 est. street price
MGI Software
(888) 644-7638
Enter 873 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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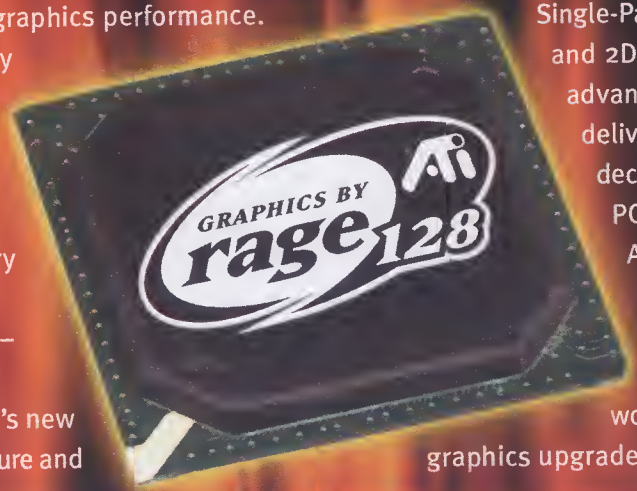

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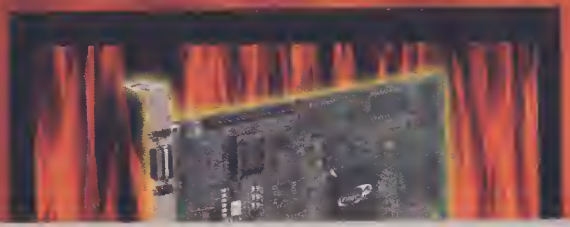

ATI RAGE FURY

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- Full OpenGL ICD, Direct 3D and DirectX 6.0 support for all your favorite 3D applications and games
- Advanced 3D features including line and edge anti-aliasing, double buffering, gouraud shading and multi-texturing
- Full 3D acceleration in all modes, all color depths, and all resolutions up to 1920x1200
- Built-in hardware DVD for full-frame, full-screen DVD playback
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ATI XPERT 128

The Price/Performance Powerhouse

ATI brings striking graphics performance to home, small office and home-based business PCs. With 16MB of memory on-board, AGP 2X graphics, brilliant 2D acceleration and a massive list of superior 3D performance features and visual enhancements, the ATI XPERT 128 is in a class all by itself. In fact, it's the best all-round graphics upgrade you can buy today.

- A 128-bit graphics engine and 128-bit memory interface for super-fast 3D and 2D graphics performance
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- Full 3D acceleration in all modes, all color depths, and all resolutions up to 1600x1200
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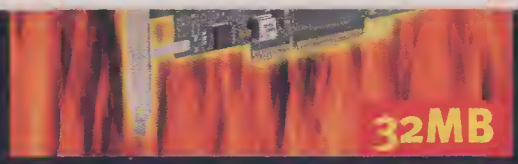

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- Advanced graphics architecture with SuperScalar Rendering, line and edge anti-aliasing, gouraud shading, Twin-Cache, Single-Pass Multi-Texturing and bump mapping
- Full 3D acceleration in all modes, all color depths, and all resolutions up to 1920x1200
- Built-in hardware DVD for full-frame, full-screen DVD playback

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GRAPHICS BY rage 128 ATI

The New Breed of Speed.

ATI

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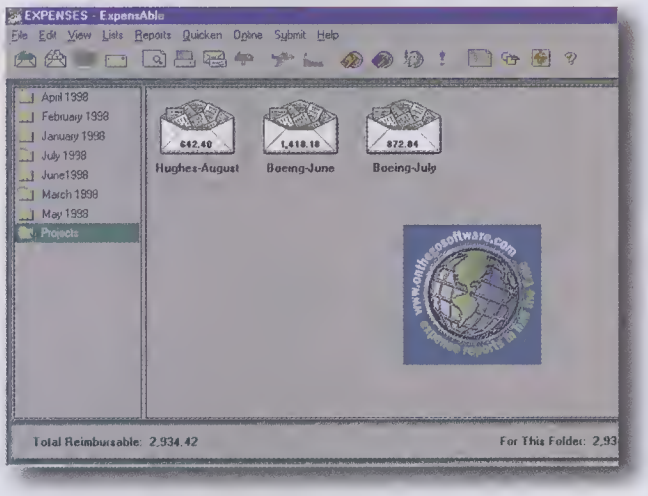
Painless Expense Reports

From canceled flights and middle seats in coach to cab lines and crowded conventions, you've got plenty of reasons to hate business travel. But now you can cross expense reports off that list, thanks to On The Go's Quicken ExpensAble 98.

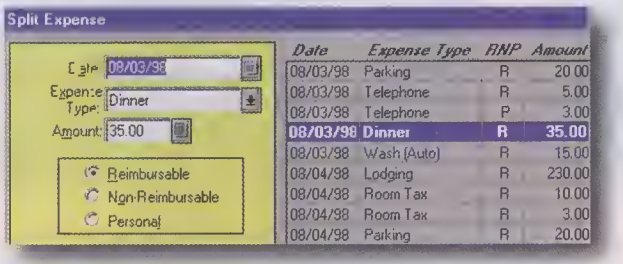
For $50, Quicken ExpensAble 98 boasts an automated approach that imposes some organization on that bundle of receipts, and jogs your memory about easily forgettable tips, taxi rides, and hotel faxes. Plus ExpensAble saves you time by cutting down on a lot of repetitive data entry, since basic information about yourself and your company need only be entered once to appear on every expense report.

Audit Trail If you're accustomed to stuffing receipts into an envelope until you get back to the office, you'll feel right at home in Quicken ExpensAble 98, which uses an electronic envelope to house the receipts for each trip. Like its namesake from Intuit, Quicken ExpensAble 98 also lets you import your credit card, checking, and other payment accounts, as well as category information from your Quicken accounts. Where do you start? Just follow the trip and hotel genies that step you through each aspect of ground and air travel and prompt you for everything from tips to laundry expenses. The hotel genie also helps you match the myriad ways that hotels itemize your bill to the categories on your company's IRS-inspired expense report.

With Quicken ExpensAble 98, you can scan in receipts using any TWAIN-compatible scanner, attach them to your expense report, and print both. You can also e-mail reports to the company bookkeeper or post them to the company Web site from the road. This latest version comes with 30 common expense-report forms and the opportunity to download 100 more standardized forms used by many Fortune 1,000 companies for free from On The Go's Web site.



Save Those Receipts Stop giving your company thousands of dollars in travel expenses. On The Go's Quicken ExpensAble 98 makes tracking, organizing, and filing your travel expenses almost easy.



Familiar Features If you're a Quicken user, you'll take to Quicken ExpensAble 98 right away. It offers many of the same features and conventions as its namesake, including the ability to itemize a receipt.

Give Me Formats While many large corporations use Quicken ExpensAble, the program doesn't link to enterprise accounting systems. Also, it doesn't recognize the native file formats of popular contact managers like Microsoft Outlook or multiuser accounting programs like Peachtree Complete Accounting. Instead, it requires you to do time-consuming field mapping to import and export data—even to Intuit QuickBooks. In contrast, Concur Technologies' Xpense Management Solution (XMS) Windows offers extensive data sharing with back-office applications. The XMS Windows interface is the equal of Quicken ExpensAble 98's, but at about $150 per user for a minimum of ten users, the XMS Windows price tag is also considerably higher.

Still, Quicken ExpensAble 98 does make a nod toward the enterprise with the bundled ExpensAble InSite server that lets you customize Quicken ExpensAble clients for expense limits via a company's Web site. An embedded Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.01 also brings ten very useful weather, reservation, and other travel-related Web sites to the program's menu bar.

The bottom line? Quicken ExpensAble 98 is an excellent tool for business's travel-weary troops. If you're one of them, it promises to save you time and hassle. **MIKE HOGAN**

FILEBOX

Quicken ExpensAble 98

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Frequent business travelers shouldn't leave home without it.

Pros: Friendly interface; lots of timesaving shortcuts.

Cons: No client/server corporate enterprise support.

Competition: Concur Technologies' Xpense Management Solution (XMS) Windows is more expensive but better for enterprise systems. Distributed by direct sales in units of ten or more, XMS Windows costs about $150 per user, three times as much as Quicken ExpensAble 98.

System Requirements: 486 PC, Windows 95, 98, or NT, 16MB of RAM (32MB for Windows NT), 35MB of hard disk space plus 50MB for Internet Explorer 4.0.

$50 est. street price (includes a free ExpensAble InSite server license for up to 25 users; site licenses start at $40 per program for 50 units)
On The Go Software
(800) 331-3416
Enter 877 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

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Best seller statement based on worldwide unit shipments.
1996-1997, Dataquest Inc. report on Consumer Photo Editing, June 16, 1998.

MGI SOFTWARE

Infolink 310 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Watch Your Back

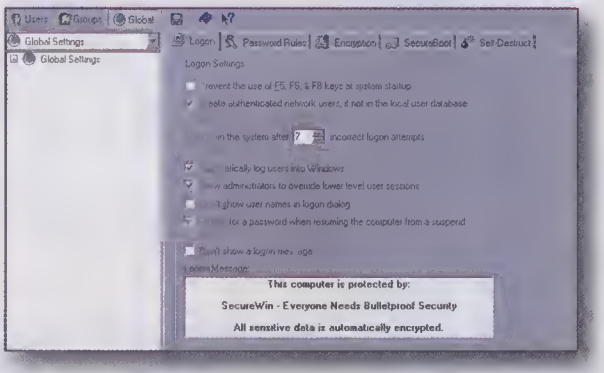
Self-destructing messages aren't just the stuff of television shows like *Mission: Impossible*. You too can create documents that annihilate themselves. That's one feature of SecureWin Desktop 2.0's security and encryption solution.

SecureWin Desktop 2.0 gets to work the moment you fire up your PC. It encrypts boot sectors and demands a password before letting you into Windows 95, 98, or NT. You can even create multiple security accounts on one PC, providing different levels of access for different people.

Local file encryption is a breeze with SecureWin Desktop. A clever Magicrypt folder encrypts any files you drag into it. To decrypt a file, just double-click on it in the folder. If you need to store secure data in a different folder, you can encrypt and password-protect your files manually.

The program encrypts any files you drag to the Recycle Bin, ensuring that they can't be recovered by scavengers. Better yet, you can securely delete files by overwriting them up to 999 times. For your most sensitive information, a self-destruct feature deletes files automatically when someone enters the wrong password a set number of times. You can also encrypt your e-mail messages if you use a mail program that supports S/MIME—though you must append an encrypted attachment to each message.

SecureWin Desktop 2.0 does an efficient job of locking your PC and files under maximum security. GORDON BASS



Paranoid? Think someone's out to get your information? Lock down your PC with SecureWin Desktop 2.0, a comprehensive set of encryption and security tools.

FILEBOX

SecureWin Desktop 2.0

★★★★

Verdict: Comprehensive security for the paranoid.

Pros: Secure booting; multiple security accounts; automatic encryption and decryption.

Cons: E-mail encryption not very practical.

$50 est. street price
SecureWin Technologies
(800) 364-0692
Enter 879 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Symantec Mobile Update

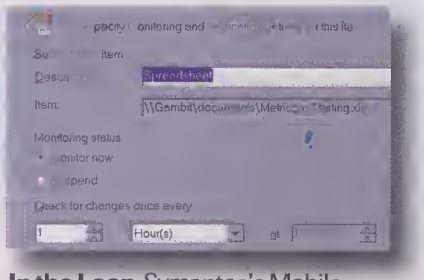
File Updates for the Road

When important files change on the office network, it's easy to feel left behind if you're dialing in from the road. The solution? Symantec's Mobile Update uses e-mail to keep remote users current with the latest versions of company files, including presentations, price lists, and financial forecasts. Because the program delivers updates via e-mail, remote users don't have to spend time connecting and searching through office networks or downloading files.

Mobile Update consists of server and client programs. The server portion resides on a Windows NT network. It monitors file changes, then attaches and sends these to remote users via e-mail. When they receive the e-mail, all they have to do is execute the attachment. The client portion lets remote users define which files the server monitors and determine the frequency of the updates. To save download time, Mobile Update compresses and sends only the file changes.

In our tests, Mobile Update did a great job of detecting and sending changes in Microsoft Word, Excel, and database (DBF) files. The interface provides convenient step-by-step wizards that walk you through the tasks of specifying files and determining the frequency of their updates. Meanwhile, the server offers adequate, straightforward tools that let administrators configure their network and e-mail.

In all, Mobile Update is a powerful and convenient way to keep remote users current with the latest files on the office network. WAYNE KAWAMOTO



In the Loop Symantec's Mobile Update automatically sends you office file updates via e-mail.

FILEBOX

Symantec Mobile Update

★★★★

Verdict: Keeps remote users in sync via e-mail.

Pros: Automatic updates; easy to configure; sends only changes and compresses them.

Cons: Security could be stronger; pricey.

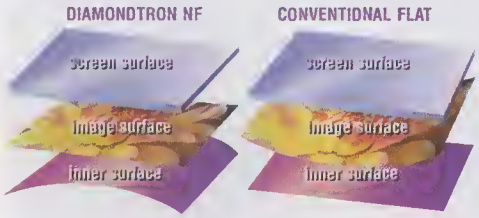
$795 list price for 10 users, $4,699 for 100 users
Symantec
(800) 441-7234, (541) 334-6054
Enter 880 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

Mitsubishi Is Changing The Face Of Desktop Monitors.

The Finesse Of Flat: Introducing Mitsubishi's Diamond Pro® 900u With The Breakthrough DIAMONDTRON NF™ CRT.

Mitsubishi's new DIAMONDTRON NF (Natural Flat) CRT technology represents an unprecedented improvement in the way you'll look at monitors from this moment on. The revolutionary, truly flat-faced CRT creates distortion-free, intuitively correct images that are much easier on your eyes. Conventional CRTs produce curves and distortions that are hard on your eyes, increasing fatigue and reducing productivity.



You've come to expect crisp, clear images from Mitsubishi's award-winning DIAMONDTRON monitors, and now the innovative Diamond Pro 900u takes monitor performance to an even higher level. The Diamond Pro 900u delivers consistently accurate image quality – side to side, center to corner. In addition, Mitsubishi's patented CRT manufacturing process makes the Diamond Pro 900u stay brighter up to twice as long as conventional CRT designs. First in a family of DIAMONDTRON NF monitors, the 19-inch (18.0-inch DVI*) Diamond Pro 900u has a maximum resolution of 1600 x 1200/75 Hz. For added flexibility it also features a self-powered USB hub that two independent computers may share the display and a single set of USB devices. DIAMONDTRON NF monitors are just flat-out better. For more information contact Mitsubishi Electronics today.

USA: 800-843-2515 • Canada: 800-387-9630
QWIKFAX: 800-937-2094
www.mitsubishi-display.com/pb/pcp/900u

Designed for Microsoft Windows 95 Mac OS

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DISPLAY PRODUCTS
Innovation On Display℠

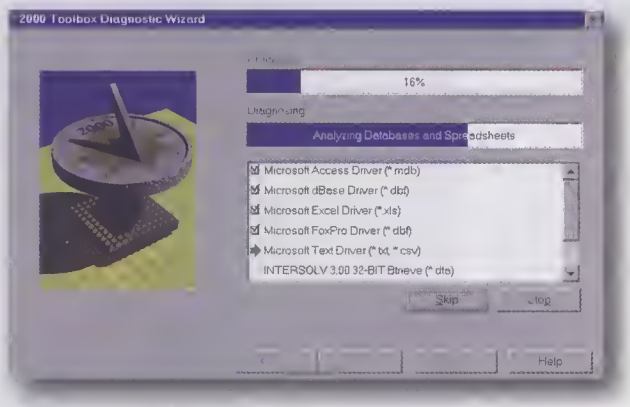
Infolink 318 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Smooth Sailing into 2000

On the big screen, Texas-size meteors and rampaging nuclear dinosaurs are the worst disasters Hollywood can imagine. In the real world, the year 2000 bug poses a bigger threat—but Network Associates' McAfee 2000 ToolBox offers a solution.

McAfee 2000 ToolBox first determines whether a computer's real-time clock and BIOS will work in the year 2000. In our testing, it successfully identified noncompliant systems without triggering false alarms on Y2K-ready PCs. The program then installs a software fix on noncompliant systems.

Next, the program checks your operating system and applications and scans database and spreadsheet data files, flagging those that represent years with two digits. We were a bit surprised that McAfee 2000 ToolBox didn't ask us to back up our hard drive before it performed these tests, but Network Associates says the risk to programs that use a date to determine licensing or maintain audit trails should be minimal.



Millennium Meltdown Ready for the year 2000? Find out with Network Associates' McAfee 2000 ToolBox.

The software is easy to use—a wizard walks you through the inspection process. You even get a virus scanner and handy system-management utilities with the package. The only downside is sparse documentation. And while McAfee 2000 ToolBox can't be used across a network, Network Associates sells a networked Y2K solution called ZAC 2000.

Sure, you can find dozens of free Y2K shareware utilities on the Web, but none is as slick or as easy to use as McAfee 2000 ToolBox. WAYNE KAWAMOTO

FILEBOX

McAfee 2000 ToolBox

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: A competent year 2000 utility.

Pros: Easy to use; fixes hardware problems; bundles extra utilities.

Cons: Can't work across a network; sparse documentation.

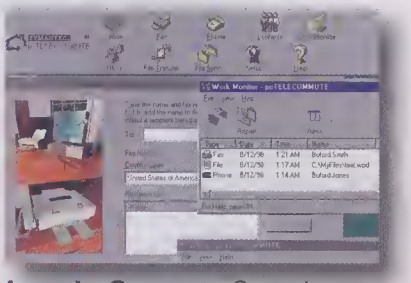
$30 est. street price
Network Associates
(800) 338-8754
Enter 881 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Symantec pcTelecommute

Telecommuter's Survival Kit

Working from home means no traffic, no interruptions, and the chance to spend the day in your underwear. Now telecommuting is even better, thanks to Symantec's $99 pcTelecommute, a suite of helpful utilities for the home warrior.

The program's Work Monitor records the time you spend on files, on the phone, and faxing. At quitting time, DayEnd Sync updates your home and office files. You can identify incoming calls with caller ID and remotely connect to and control PCs at the office (run applications, send and receive faxes). But unlike Symantec's WinFax Pro and pcAnywhere, pcTelecommute can't schedule faxes to be sent at a later time.



Lose the Commute Control your networked office PC from home with Symantec's pcTelecommute.

You access all the functions from the simple Telecommute Control Center, and built-in security features ask for user names and passwords. While pcTelecommute's remote access and fax features work well, it imports contact information only from text files and doesn't synchronize with popular contact mangers, not even Symantec's own Act.

If you own WinFax Pro and pcAnywhere, you already have more remote-access and faxing capabilities than pcTelecommute offers. By the same token, any competent PIM or contact manager can record the amount of time that you spend performing tasks—though not automatically, as pcTelecommute does.

But when you're working hard for the money from home, pcTelecommute will quickly return your $99 investment. WAYNE KAWAMOTO

FILEBOX

pcTelecommute

☆☆☆☆

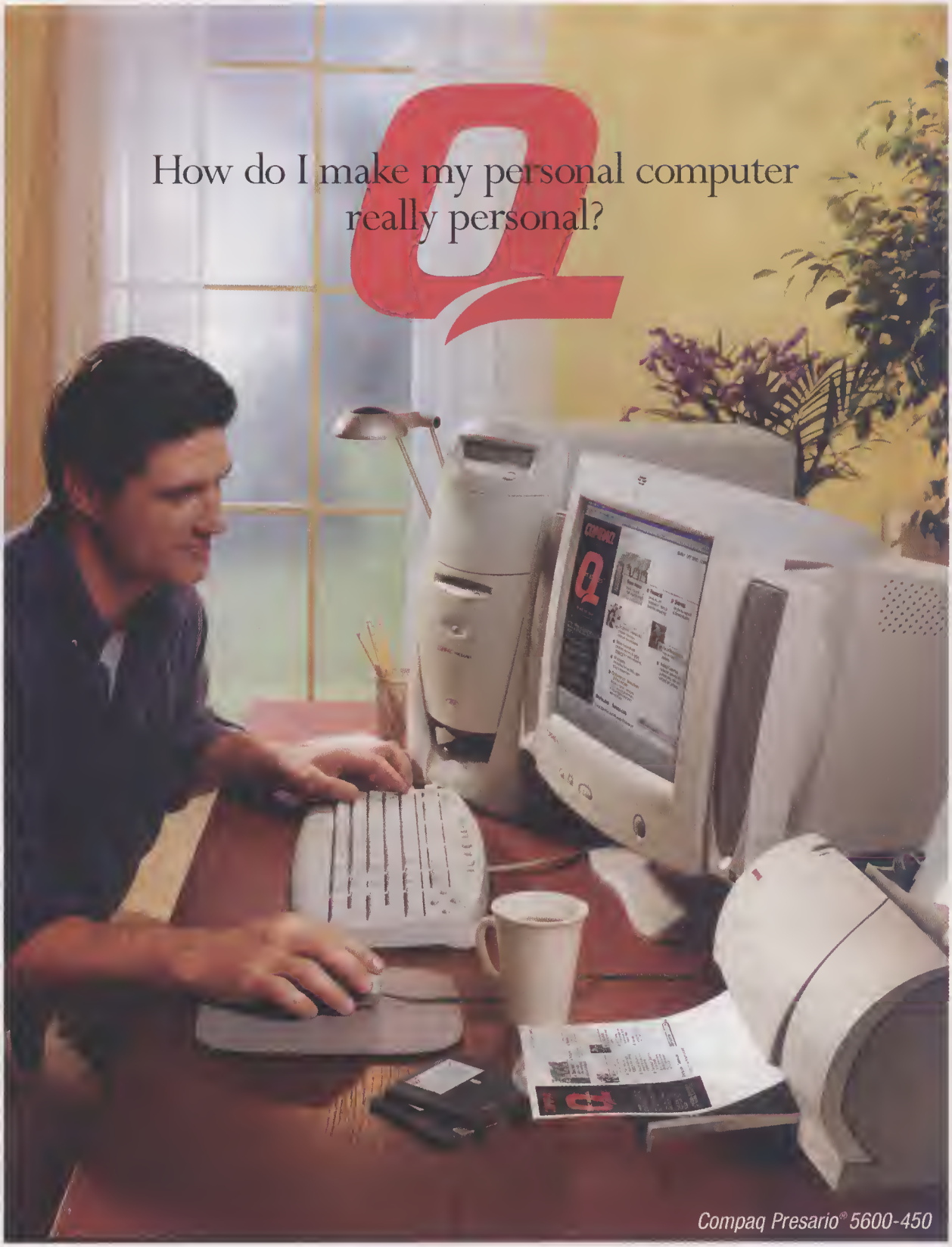
Verdict: Working from home? Don't telecommute without this suite of utilities.

Pros: Easy to use; speedy remote access; handy time measurement tools.

Cons: Can't schedule remote faxing; doesn't easily sync with contact managers.

$99 list price
Symantec
(800) 441-7234, (541) 334-6054
Enter 882 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE



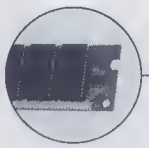
intel inside
pentium® II PROCESSOR

COMPAQ

Easy. Have Compaq build one for you.

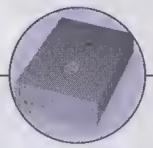
Nobody knows what your computer needs are as well as you do. So shouldn't you be the one to decide what goes into yours? When you order these Presario Internet PCs you're in the driver's seat. You choose how much memory you want, hard drive size, whether you want a CD-ROM drive or DVD, advanced graphics, video memory, even the type of monitor you want. And you don't need a degree in computer engineering to build the computer that best suits your needs — we'll build it for you. And if you're not sure what features are best for you, we'll help you decide. Just call Compaq, visit our website, or stop by a Compaq *Built For You Custom PC Center* at select retailers. **Bring the world's best-selling computer home today.**

Here are some of the features we can personalize for you:



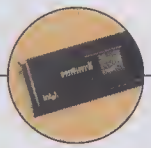
Memory

Speed up performance by choosing from 64 MB to a whopping 384 MB of Synchronous DRAM.



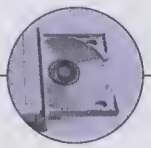
Hard Drive Size

Whether you're writing the great American novel or just surfing the Net, we've got the hard drive size that's right for you.



Processor Speed

You can choose from the latest Intel® Pentium® II Processors, including the new 450 MHz.



CD-ROM/DVD

A built-in Zip drive, CD-ROM, or DVD drive is the perfect way to accessorize and get the most from your Presario PC.

Monitor/Display

All our monitors assure that your applications will be displayed boldly and vividly.

intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

All prices shown are Compaq Direct selling price after applicable rebate. Prices shown do not include applicable sales tax and shipping. Products and prices valid in U.S. only. Actual retail price may vary. Specifications and prices are subject to change or cancellation without notice. Not all Compaq Presario models available in all retail stores. ***50 free hours of Internet access is offered when Compaq Easy Internet Access is chosen from Compaq Internet Setup. The 50 free hours must be used over a 30-day period from initial setup. A valid credit card is required to initiate service, although no charges will be incurred until the 50-hour trial has expired. **$100 mail-in rebate from Compaq upon activation of this free trial of Compaq Easy Internet Access. Rebate offer valid only in the USA and expires 4/30/99. See rebate coupon included with product for additional terms and conditions.** [1]For hard drives, GB = billion bytes. [2]ITU v.90 modems are designed only to allow faster downloads from K56flex or v.90 compliant digital sources. Maximum achievable download transmission rates are currently unknown, may not reach 56 kilobits per second (Kbps), and will vary with line conditions. [3]24X Max CD-ROM data transfer rates may vary from 1500 to 3600Kbps. [4]32X Max CD-ROM data transfer rates may vary from 1800 to 4800Kbps.

COMPAQ

Here are just a few of the hundreds of possible combinations:

(Shown with Presario MV700 Monitor)

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$2,649
-$100 mail-in rebate**

$2,549

Base price includes:
- Intel® Pentium® II Processor, 450 MHz
- 13.5 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 5X DVD-RDM Drive[5]
- 128 MB SyncDRAM expandable to 3B4 MB
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- Digital Creativity Imaging Center w/1394
- Diamond Viper 550 w/16 MB SDRAM
- 10 Mbps Ethernet port, Cable Modem Ready
- JBL Pro Premium Speakers w/Subwoofer
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- Microsoft® Featured Home Collection
- Microsoft Windows®98
- Compaq V910 19" Monitor (1B.0" VIA)

Personalize it by choosing:
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- 16.B GB Hard Drive:[1] Add $139

(Shown with Presario MV700 Monitor)

Compaq Presario 5600-450

$2,199
-$100 mail-in rebate**

$2,099

Base price includes:
- Intel Pentium II Processor, 450 MHz
- 13.5 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 32X Max CD-RDM Drive[4]
- 12B MB SyncDRAM expandable to 3B4 MB
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- 2X AGP Graphics w/8 MB SGRAM
- 10 Mbps Ethernet port, Cable Modem Ready
- New! Iomega Zip Built-In™ Drive
- Microsoft Featured Home Collection
- Microsoft Windows98
- Compaq V720 17" Monitor (15.9" VIA)
- JBL Pro Speakers

Personalize it by choosing:
- 16.8 GB Hard Drive:[1] Add $139
- Diamond Viper 550 w/16 MB SDRAM: Add $50

(Shown with Presario MV700 Monitor)

Compaq Presario 5600-350

$1,599
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$1,499

Base price includes:
- Intel Pentium II Processor, 350 MHz
- 8.0 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 32X Max CD-RDM Drive[4]
- 64 MB SyncDRAM expandable to 3B4 MB
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- 2X AGP Graphics w/B MB SGRAM
- 10 Mbps Ethernet port, Cable Modem Ready
- New! Iomega Zip Built-In™ Drive
- Microsoft Featured Home Collection
- Microsoft Windows98
- Compaq V720 17" Monitor (15.9" VIA)
- JBL Pro Speakers

Personalize it by choosing:
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- Digital Creativity Imaging Center: Add $49

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$3,099
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$2,999

Base price includes:
- Intel Pentium II Processor, 450 MHz
- 16.8 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 5X DVD-RDM Drive[5]
- 256 MB SyncDRAM expandable to 3B4 MB
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- Diamond Viper 550 w/16 MB SDRAM
- 10 Mbps Ethernet port, Cable Modem Ready
- JBL Pro Premium Speakers w/Subwoofer
- New! Iomega Zip Built-In™ Drive
- Microsoft Dffice 97 SBE v.2.0
- Microsoft Windows98
- Compaq V910 19" Monitor (18.0" VIA)

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- Fast Ethernet 10/100 NIC: Add $69

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$1,999

Base price includes:
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- 8.0 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 32X Max CD-RDM Drive[4]
- 64 MB SyncDRAM expandable to 3B4 MB
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- 2X AGP Graphics w/B MB SGRAM
- 10 Mbps Ethernet port, Cable Modem Ready
- New! Iomega Zip Built-In™ Drive
- Microsoft Dffice 97 SBE v.2.0
- Microsoft Windows9B
- Compaq V910 19" Monitor (18.0" VIA)
- JBL Pro Speakers

Personalize it by choosing:
- 12B MB SyncDRAM: Add $100
- Presario FP500 Flat Panel Monitor: Add $430

Compaq Presario 5600-400

$1,950
-$100 mail-in rebate**

$1,850

Base price includes:
- Intel Pentium II Processor, 400 MHz
- 10.0 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 5X DVD-RDM Drive[5]
- 64 MB SyncDRAM expandable to 384 MB
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- 2X AGP Graphics w/B MB SGRAM
- 10 Mbps Ethernet port, Cable Modem Ready
- New! Iomega Zip Built-In™ Drive
- Microsoft Featured Home Collection
- Microsoft Windows9B
- Compaq V720 17" Monitor (15.9" VIA)
- JBL Pro Speakers

Personalize it by choosing:
- 1.5 Mbps U-ADSL/56K v.90 Digital Modem:[8] Add $49
- 13.5 GB Hard Drive:[1] Add $50
- Diamond Viper 550 w/16 MB SDRAM: Add $50

Buy one of these computers and get **50 free hours** on the Net.* Plus, get a **$100 rebate** on these select Compaq Presario minitower or desktop PCs when you sign up for this Compaq Easy Internet Access free trial.**

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Compaq Presario 1800-266

$2,499
-$100 mail-in rebate**

$2,399

Base price includes:
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- 12.1" TFT Active Matrix Display
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- 4.0 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 24X Max CD-ROM Drive[3]
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- Smart Lilon Battery
- 512 KB L2 Pipeline Burst Cache
- 256-bit Accelerated Graphics w/2.5 MB VRAM
- Microsoft® Office 97 Small Business Edition
- Microsoft Windows®98

Personalize it by choosing:
- 96 MB SyncDRAM: Add $100
- 6.4 GB Hard Drive:[1] Add $200
- Brief Carrying Case: Add $119

Compaq Presario 1800-300

$2,699
-$100 mail-in rebate**

$2,599

Base price includes:
- Intel Pentium II Processor, 300 MHz
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- 64 MB SyncDRAM expandable to 160 MB
- 4.0 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 24X Max CD-ROM Drive[3]
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- Smart Lilon Battery
- 512 KB L2 Pipeline Burst Cache
- 256-bit Accelerated Graphics w/2.5 MB VRAM
- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition
- Microsoft Windows98

Personalize it by choosing:
- 96 MB SyncDRAM: Add $100
- 6.4 GB Hard Drive:[1] Add $200
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive:[5] Add $200

Compaq Presario 1800-300

$3,399
-$100 mail-in rebate**

$3,299

Base price includes:
- Intel Pentium II Processor, 300 MHz
- 13.3" TFT Active Matrix XGA Display
- 96 MB SyncDRAM expandable to 160 MB
- 6.4 GB UltraDMA Hard Drive[1]
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive[5]
- 56K ITU v.90 Modem[2]
- Smart Lilon Battery
- 512 KB L2 Pipeline Burst Cache
- 256-bit Accelerated Graphics w/2.5 MB VRAM
- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition
- Microsoft Windows98

Personalize it by choosing:
- 160 MB SyncDRAM: Add $250
- Executive Leather Carrying Case: Add $200

More value from Compaq!

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Iomega Zip Built-In™ Drive

- The standard in 100 MB portable storage
- One Zip disk equals the capacity of 70 floppies
- Reliable backup of your important stuff
- Easily carry files between work and home
- Plus: Buy a Zip 10-pak for only $99 — so everyone in the family can store their own stuff

Compaq IJ 200

$129.99

- Single-head thermal inkjet technology
- Up to 600 x 600 DPI resolution
- Sharp text and sharp color prints
- Print Speeds:
  Up to 3½ pages per minute black
  Up to 1½ pages per minute color
- Paper tray holds up to 30 sheets

Every Compaq product comes with a standard one-year limited warranty[7] and the assurance of our Extra Mile Service, the most comprehensive and flexible PC support available. You'll have access to fast, accurate, 7x24 technical support via the phone or Web.

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intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

[1]The 5X DVD-ROM Drive transfer rate is up to 6,750 KB/s compared to 1,352 KB/s for 1X DVD-ROM Drives. [2]2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drives run at a higher maximum transfer rate of up to 2.76 MB/s compared to 1st Generation DVD-ROM Drives which run at a maximum transfer rate of up to 1.348 MB/s. [7]One year parts and labor. Labor for desktop systems is carry-in service with on-site service during the first 90 days of ownership. Labor for notebook systems is pick-up service. *U-ADSL updates may be downloaded from Compaq's Website when available. The 1.5 Mbps U-ADSL/56K v.90 modem protocol is designed to allow faster downloads from U-ADSL, K56flex, or v.90 compliant digital sources. Availability of U-ADSL services will vary by region and Internet Service Provider (ISP), and may differ from v.90 ISP services. Maximum achievable download transmission rates with U-ADSL and K56flex/v.90 are currently unknown, may not reach 1.5 Mbps or 56 Kbps respectively, and will vary based on service provider, line conditions, and distance. Compaq is not liable for pictorial or typographical errors in this advertisement. Compaq, the Compaq Logo, and Presario registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Microsoft, MS, and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Intel, the Intel Inside Logo, and Pentium are registered trademarks of Intel Corporation. Product and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks and/or registered trademarks of other companies. **Call Compaq Monday-Friday 7:00am-11:00pm (CST), Saturday and Sunday 7:00am-7:00pm (CST).** ©1998 Compaq Computer Corporation. All rights reserved.

COMPAQ
Better answers.℠

Front-Office Material

SNEAK PREVIEW

Still think the ideal small-business Web site requires a big-business budget? Wake up and get your hands on a copy of Microsoft FrontPage 2000. As a component of Microsoft Office 2000, the latest version of FrontPage includes everything you need to build a Web site your way, without cumbersome coding.

From hand-holding wizards and ready-made thematic templates, to high-end database and development features, FrontPage 2000 is a Web site creation and management tool for the masses. Will it spell doom for Webmaster geeks and their complex, specialized tools? Not quite, but it sure comes close.

Familiar Face From the start, if you're comfortable with Microsoft Office you'll be right at home with FrontPage 2000 and its Office-like customizable toolbars and menus.

Launching FrontPage and starting a Web page feel a lot like launching Word and starting a Word document—you're immediately staring at a blank slate bordered by an array of toolbars, views, and menus. If you know what you're doing, this approach gets you started quickly, but novices will be more comfortable using FrontPage's tutorials and wizards.

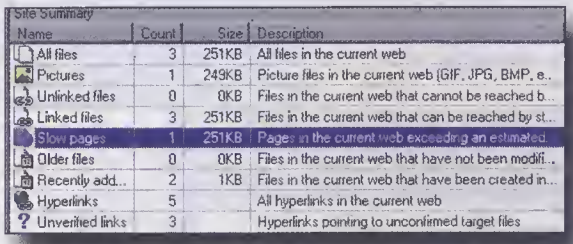
For nonartists, built-in design themes and templates serve up professional-looking colors, graphics, buttons, and backgrounds, all of which (thankfully) are customizable. One of the best new tools is the Format Painter, which lets you apply all the formatting, styles, and effects from one piece of text to another in a single quick stroke. When you're ready to go live, one-button publishing using FrontPage's built-in FTP is painless. And instead of forcing a personal Web server onto your system for testing server-side features, FrontPage now uses a disk-based Web—simply a folder that contains all the files for your Web site.

A few of the new, more complex features include stronger support for ODBC databases, a built-in Script Editor for tweaking JavaScript or VBScript, and a selection of prebuilt ActiveX Web Components. Unlike previous versions, FrontPage 2000 boasts complete HTML source preservation, letting you import and export code without ugly, proprietary modifications.

Keep It Fresh FrontPage 2000 includes a selection of views, reports, and tasks to help you manage and update your site with ease. For example, after viewing the site summary report for broken links and old files, you can quickly assign and prioritize tasks for yourself and members of your group. As for group site creation and collaboration—something NetObject's TeamFusion does well, but in a proprietary way—FrontPage 2000 is heading in the right direction with page-level check-in and check-out and workflow reports, but we'd like to see ties to Microsoft Project for even more powerful management.

FrontPage isn't for everyone. Web professionals will still rely on specialized tools, and folks not already in the grip of Microsoft Office won't truly appreciate its benefits. But $149 is a small price to pay for so many useful features—and as a component of Microsoft Office, FrontPage 2000 is the future of Web publishing. RICH SCHWERIN

Click and Go Create and manage exactly the site you want with Microsoft's $149 FrontPage 2000, included in a version of Office 2000.



Site Summary

Name	Count	Size	Description
All files	3	251KB	All files in the current web
Pictures	1	249KB	Picture files in the current web (GIF, JPG, BMP, e...
Unlinked files	0	0KB	Files in the current web that cannot be reached b...
Linked files	3	251KB	Files in the current web that can be reached by st...
Slow pages	1	251KB	Pages in the current web exceeding an estimated...
Older files	0	0KB	Files in the current web that have not been modifi...
Recently add...	2	1KB	Files in the current web that have been created in...
Hyperlinks	5		All hyperlinks in the current web
Unverified links	3		Hyperlinks pointing to unconfirmed target files

What's the Status? FrontPage 2000 provides a long list of prebuilt site reports that keep your Web site fresh, fast, and friendly.

FILEBOX

Microsoft FrontPage 2000

☆☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Build Web pages as easily as Office documents.

Pros: Powerful integration with Microsoft Office; strong site management/administration tools; multiuser authoring without proprietary code; handy quick-start features including wizards, themes, and templates; support for laundry list of Internet standards.

Cons: Office integration alienates non-Office users; collaborative group-publishing features a bit rudimentary.

$149 for new users, $109 for Office (versions prior to 2000) users after $40 mail-in rebate, $55 for upgrade, est. street prices
Microsoft Corp.
(800) 426-9400, (425) 882-8080
Enter 891 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

Database Designer for the Web

Warning: If you're still coding with run-of-the-mill HTML to craft Web sites, your days are numbered—especially when it comes to sites tied to databases. So how are you going to get up to speed in a hurry? With Elemental Software's Drumbeat 2.0. Its drag-and-drop interface does more than just let you create pixel-perfect DHTML pages filled with JavaScript; it creates data-driven Web sites with user-provided information.

Site Builder Drumbeat isn't a program for creating a single Web page, nor is it a site builder that forces you to start from scratch. Instead, you import an entire existing site from your local drive or from the Web to get started. But expect to adjust some page elements after they're imported. And be prepared for a steep learning curve. Imagine working with a complex page-layout program like QuarkXPress, then add database integration and dynamic publishing, and you've got an idea of how Drumbeat feels. Although it comes with a Getting Started guide, the main 625-page manual skips over basic explanations, such as how each toolbar button works.

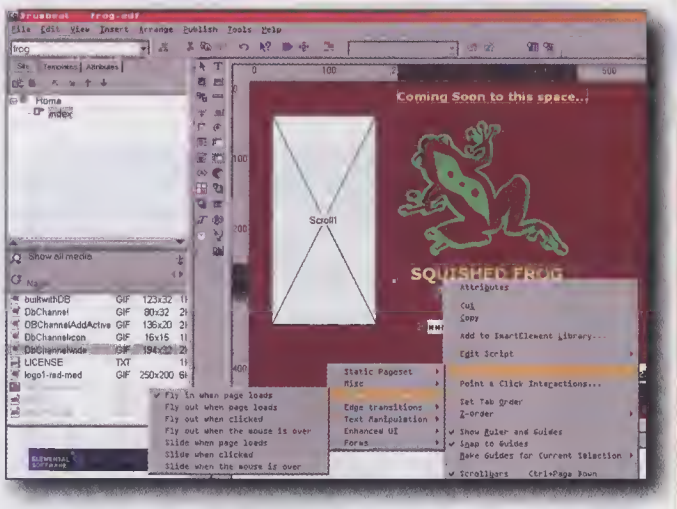
The interface for Drumbeat is a right-side editing window where you drag and drop the elements you need to build a site or an individual page. The more you drop in, the more windows you get—database-driven sites can view the database contents on a grid, while invisible elements such as sound files are shown in the "basement" at the bottom.

Drumbeat lets you specify the target browser or browsers for your site's pages: Internet Explorer 4.0 and Netscape Communicator 4.0, Internet Explorer 4.0 only (to take advantage of its local data-caching), Netscape Navigator 3.0 (because of its own idiosyncrasies), or a generic browser. The SmartPages feature then takes visitors to the appropriate page, be it static HTML or Active Server Pages (ASP).

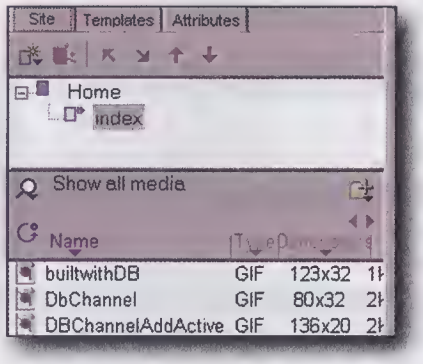
Drumbeat shows visitors only one page at a time to limit confusion, though it may generate many variations of that same page depending on what settings you specified. You create the database content for a Pageset by importing any ODBC database or even a comma-delimited text file (CSV). The coding behind your pages is hidden from view and later translated to HTML when the pages are sent to a remote server.

Custom Content Your site doesn't have to work with a database to benefit from Drumbeat. JavaScript crunchers in a collaborative environment, for example, will like the Contracts feature: Write one JavaScript-based point-and-click interaction script and an entire workgroup can share it. Web designers will be thrilled with the easy access it provides to DHTML effects, the simple drag-and-drop page layout, and Drumbeat's templates and style sheets. Plus it comes with templates that a Net novice might appreciate for items like presentations or personal pages.

Until there's a Drumbeat Lite, entry-level users are better off with Microsoft FrontPage 98. But if you've got the time to master a complex publishing environment, Drumbeat 2.0 could quickly put you a step ahead of the competition. **BONNY L. GEORGIA**



No Coding Need to tie a database to your Web site? Check out Elemental Software's Drumbeat 2.0, the drag-and-drop way to create snazzy DHTML pages in JavaScript without wasting time.



Media Management Keeping track of all your site's images and sounds is easy with Drumbeat 2.0's Explorer-like file-management interface.

FILEBOX

Drumbeat 2.0

★★★★

Verdict: Fastest possible way to create a database-driven Web site.

Pros: Excellent and easy-to-use DHTML/multimedia effects; drag-and-drop database support.

Cons: Steep learning curve; few getting-started templates.

Competition: Drumbeat has the database smarts that other graphical Web-site editors like NetObjects Fusion 3.0 and Microsoft FrontPage 98 lack—and even more DHTML muscle than Macromedia Dreamweaver 1.2. However, Drumbeat costs twice as much as the competition. It's also not a good choice for programmers who want to hand-tweak code.

System Requirements: 200MHz Pentium; 60MB of hard disk space; 32MB of RAM (64MB recommended); Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0.

$700 est. street price
Elemental Software
(877) 378-6232
(760) 931-7171
Enter 895 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

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The HP PhotoSmart photo scanner & photo printer let you print amazingly crisp, clear pictures at home. No waiting in line or wondering if the clerk will reprint frame 24 instead of 24A. To start, the 30-bit scanner happily scans slides or negatives at 2400 dpi and photos at 300 dpi. It then zips them into your PC where you can repair old photos, add text or special effects, even remove that mildly unnerving red eye. Next, at the push of a button, the printer produces sharp, vibrant images that look and feel like real photos. Speaking of which, the HP PhotoSmart system can handle a variety of paper sizes and finishes, and produces enlargements and reprints in just minutes. You also get Microsoft® Picture It!™ photo-enhancing software. As well as a terrific break on price: the scanner is just **$299** and the printer **$199** after our mail-in rebate.* Real photos at home without having to take out a second mortgage. The HP PhotoSmart system. Get the picture.

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Mail to: HP PhotoSmart Rebates, P.O. Box 7281, Mankato, MN 56006-7281. Envelope containing this coupon and your store receipt must be received by 3/1/99. Any claims received after this date will be returned as ineligible.

Receive: A $100 rebate for printer and/or $100 rebate for scanner.

Offer good from 7/12/98 through 1/31/99. Purchases before or after these dates are not eligible for this offer. Purchase date is determined by invoice or receipt date. Allow 7-8 weeks for processing. Incomplete or illegible submissions will be returned. Keep copies of materials submitted; originals submitted become Hewlett-Packard (HP) property and will not be returned. Limit one rebate per product purchased. HP reserves the right to request additional information regarding this claim, and the right to confirm identification. False information disqualifies this claim, making it subject to review under U.S. Postal Regulations. Violators may be prosecuted. Offer not valid with any other HP offer. Offer not valid on refurbished HP products. Only purchases made from an authorized HP reseller in the 50 United States, its territories, and Canada are valid. If terms and conditions are not met, rebate will not be sent. Void where prohibited, taxed or restricted by law. HP is not responsible for lost, damaged or delayed claims. If you have any questions, please call the HP PhotoSmart Awards Center at 1-888-HP4-FUNPICS from 7 am to 6:30 pm CST, Monday through Friday.

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1-888-HP4-FUNPICS *Scanner price before rebate $399. Printer price before rebate $299. (Average street prices.) Void in CT and ME. www.photosmart.com

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Plug Your Office into the Net

You've got a small budget and big plans. Top of the list? Internet access for all employees. While you recover from the sticker shock of individual ISP accounts, check out Umax Technologies' $300 UGate II—a great way for everyone to share one account.

The UGate II is a four-port Ethernet hub that lets you connect up to four computers to the Internet and is expandable with an external Ethernet hub. The easy setup doesn't require any software installation (all you need is a network card and an external modem). After installation, all four computers will be able to access the Internet using one account, provided you've already installed and configured TCP/IP. And you'll find two communication ports for analog or ISDN modems.

Well Connected Give everyone in the office a Web connection with Umax Technologies' $300 UGate II.

Using Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP), the UGate II assigns IP addresses to connected systems automatically. For configuration, the UGate II sports a smart Web-based interface to add, modify, and delete users. Plus it lets you define access restrictions for individuals or groups using packet filtering—a great way to keep the marketing folks off those sports sites and hard at work. In all, the UGate II is an inexpensive and easy way to grant Internet access to your small workgroup. IBRAHIM GUL

FILEBOX

Umax Technologies UGate II

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Internet access for your small workgroup—and your small budget.

Pros: Four-port 10Mbps Ethernet hub.

Cons: Lacks built-in analog/digital modem.

$300 est. street price
Umax Technologies
(800) 562-0311
(510) 651-4000
Enter 898 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

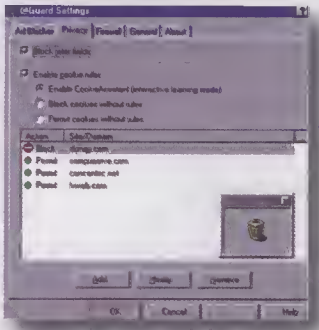
WRQ @Guard 3.0

Faster, More Private Web Access

SNEAK PREVIEW

Not only is your Web access s-l-o-w, you've had it with cookies and site snoops. The answer? A $30 utility from WRQ called @Guard. To speed up performance and protect privacy, @Guard 3.0 blocks Web page ads and controls cookies. You can even set @Guard to block all the advertisements, banners, and animated GIFs on Web pages.

Setting up ad blocking is easy, although you have to do it manually for each site you browse. Visit a site and then copy and paste ads (or any image you like) into @Guard's Ad Trashcan. The next time you access the page, you won't have to wait for the ad to load. The performance gains depend on the number and complexity of the graphics and ads. After blocking images and ads, we saw performance increase by up to 75 percent.



Speed Secrets Get faster Web performance and protect your privacy with WRQ's @Guard 3.0.

The program also alerts you when sites try to ply you with cookies, and gives you the option of accepting or denying them. It's similar to the feature found in browsers already, but it works on a site-by-site basis. Also, @Guard offers useful firewall features that competently deny access to and from other applications, network ports, and IP addresses, and it includes password protection to control these settings.

Overall, the utility is simple to install and use, with tabbed folders and adequate help menus that explain how to use the program. And although we'd like a bit more documentation, @Guard 3.0 is a smart way to boost sluggish Web browsing while guarding your online privacy. WAYNE KAWAMOTO

FILEBOX

WRQ @Guard 3.0

☆☆☆☆

Verdict: Block cookies and ads, and speed your Web access in the bargain.

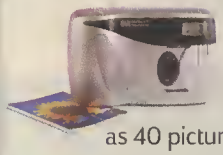
Pros: Ad blocking means faster Web page updates; low cost.

Cons: Lots of manual configuration.

$30 est. street price
WRQ
(800) 872-2829, (206) 217-7100
Enter 899 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

ANY DIGITAL PHOTO CAN TRAVEL MILLIONS OF MILES OVER THE INTERNET, BUT NOT MANY CAN MAKE IT TEN FEET TO THE WALL.



Real photographs. That's the goal for digital camera users who want to print their photos. And that's where the HP PhotoSmart C20 digital camera with megapixel resolution enters the proverbial picture. It's chock full of resolution—try printing with 1152 x 872 pixels (then compare with photos from a VGA camera). It stores as many as 40 pictures in JPEG format on a compact, removable 4MB memory card (or up to 240 photos on an optional 48MB card). And because you can also use the 1.8 inch color LCD to review each shot, bad pictures can be instantly deleted to make room for other potential masterpieces. Then, once you have the shots you want, the C20 automatically downloads them into your PC where you can print out thumbnails of all your shots on an index sheet. (Or view your photos on a TV using the handy 16 foot video cable.) The **$499*** C20 has all the features you'd expect to find—like a built-in flash, auto focus (plus macro mode for amazing close-ups), and a precision glass lens system, plus some you wouldn't expect, like Microsoft® Picture It!™ software and HP PhotoSmart photo finishing software. Many digital cameras give you features. How many give you real photos?

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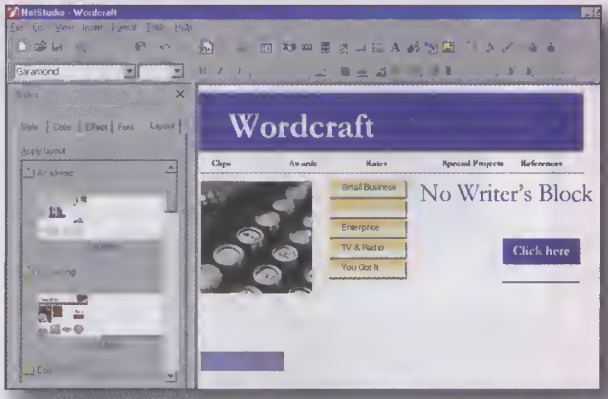
www.photosmart.com

Internet Graphics Wizard

Got the design skills of an orang-utan? That docsn't mean you need to settle for ugly Web pages. NetStudio 1.0, a $149 image editor, is perfect for people who need to create sharp-looking graphics for their Web pages but aren't artists or Adobe Photoshop mavens.

NetStudio's interface is so similar to a Microsoft Office application that you'll instantly feel at home. You can effortlessly build all the key elements of a Web page from scratch: banners, navigation bars, bulleted lists, cvcn flowcharts. You finesse these images with Blur, Sharpen, Brightness, and Contrast buttons. Of course, you can apply these tweaks to photographs as well.



Style Guide Apply styles—NetStudio 1.0 ships with 50—to specific pieces or entire Web pages for an instant makeover. Or combine styles to create new graphics.

Another nice feature: NetStudio automatically saves your images as Web-friendly GIFs, JPEGs, or PNGs. What's more, it integrates beautifully with HTML editors like FrontPage and Fusion. Double-click on an image in one of these HTML editors, and NetStudio pops up with your image.

NetStudio's no Photoshop. It still won't make your pages match those of the pros. But this software gives you good-enough-to-use graphics without asking that you pay a fortune. Or asking you to play the artiste. GREGG KEIZER

FILEBOX

NetStudio 1.0

Verdict: Punch out decent Web graphics without an art degree.

Pros: Works like a Microsoft Office application; styles make changes a snap; plentiful editing tools.

Cons: Builds a limited variety of Web graphics.

$149 est. street price
NetStudio Corp.
(510) 644-9700
Enter 900 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

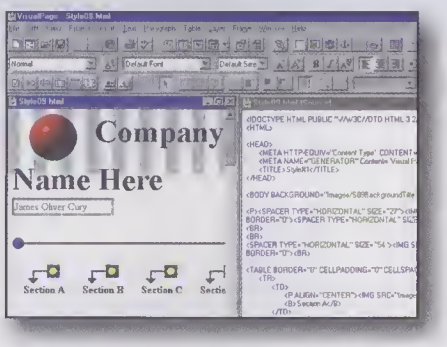
Symantec Visual Page 2.0

All-in-One Web Designer

It's every Webmaster's dream—a software program that designs and manages your Web site for you. We're not there yet, but Symantec's Visual Page brings the dream closer to reality.

With Visual Page 2.0, the idea is to use metaphors and tools you already understand. That gives you two options: Follow the Project Wizard, or start with a blank screen and use the familiar do-it-yourself tools available in most word processor/desktop publishing interfaces.

The Project Wizard leads you through a series of steps resulting in a view that displays your files, graphics, links, and server and site status—so you can rearrange pages and check for any bad links.



Cheat Sheet Design a Web page on your coffee break—Symantec's Visual Page 2.0 does the heavy lifting for you.

If you're starting from scratch, it's far easier to open one of the provided business-themed templates and amend it as needed (12,000 images are included on the CD) or use the floating toolbars or drag and drop to add tables, frames, movies, radio buttons, and so on. Text wraps around images automatically—unless you opt to use the Layers mode, in which objects placed on a page do not affect other objects.

For all its shortcuts, the program still needs more wizards to step you through tricky maneuvers, and multiple levels of undo are missing too.

If you dream of having cascading style sheets, layers, and a color-coded editor, get Visual Page and visualize your new Web page. JAMES OLIVER CURY

FILEBOX

Symantec Visual Page 2.0

Verdict: Everything you need to build a basic Web site.

Pros: Intuitive interface; automated code generation.

Cons: Needs more wizards; lacks multiple levels of undo.

$100 est. street price; $50 upgrade
Symantec Corp.
(800) 441-7234, (541) 334-6054
Enter 901 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

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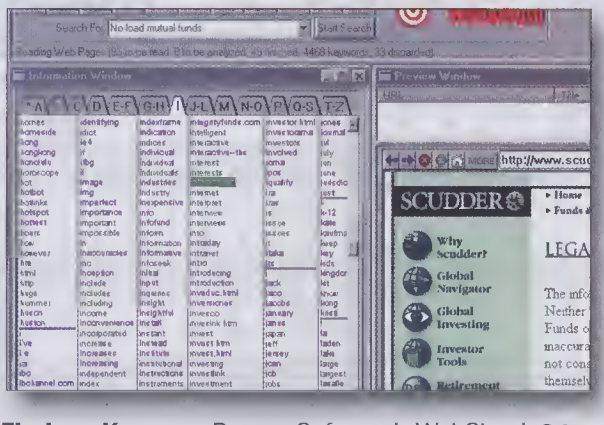
www.3dfx.com

Infolink 213 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Your Search Is Over

You thought searching the Internet was complicated? You don't know the half of it. Prompt Software's WebSleuth 2.0 metasearch tool helps you find anything under the sun, but beware: This may be more than you bargained for.

WebSleuth works like your own personal research librarian, sifting through any of 34 preset directories and search engines. While it uses only 5 by default (Yahoo, Pathfinder, AltaVista, Infoseek, and Excite), you can activate and deactivate these engines easily.



Finders, Keepers Prompt Software's WebSleuth 2.0 goes beyond basic search-engine helper utilities by indexing all related keywords and phrases from sites.

Things get interesting when you enter your query—however complicated or straightforward—into the short, simple text box and watch the software go to work. WebSleuth produces a scrollable index that displays the matching pages it finds (but doesn't rank them) and discards dead links. Click on one of four tabs and you can also see indexes of related phrases or words and the Web sites on which they appear.

If you're conducting a basic search, you'll drown in the sheer volume of information. But advanced users and wordsmiths will love WebSleuth's thoroughness. Fifteen minutes of practice—and $40—gets even jaded users beyond just searching the Net and into the researching they really need to be doing. JAMES OLIVER CURY

FILEBOX

WebSleuth 2.0

★★★

Verdict: An industrial-strength search companion.

Pros: Thorough; indexes related keywords and phrases; deletes dead links; inexpensive.

Cons: Doesn't rank hits; hard to add new search engines; interface and resulting list of hits can be unwieldy.

$40 est. street price
Prompt Software
(888) 475-3884, (408) 370-5046
Enter 902 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Microsoft NetShow Services 3.0

Now Playing on the Net

Even a slow Web connection hasn't stopped most of us from checking out the streaming audio and video content on the Net—even if it is mostly static-filled audio and jagged, fuzzy video. But thanks to Microsoft's free viewer, NetShow Services 3.0, you just might *enjoy* streaming content.

In NetShow Services 3.0, video and audio quality have been dramatically improved over previous versions thanks to technology licensed from RealNetworks. NetShow's audio quality is quite good, even with a 28.8Kbps connection. Video at that rate, however, has always been an iffy proposition, and it still is with NetShow.

Say What? NetShow Services delivers streaming Internet audio and video.

Compared with RealVideo, NetShow provides sharper images, but video transitions aren't completely smooth.

Want to create your own Net audio? NetShow Encoder makes it easy to create ASF files, using wizards to help you encode live video/audio or translate WAV, AVI, and MP3 files at data rates from 14.4Kbps to 512Kbps. You can create versions for a 28.8Kbps and 56Kbps connection simultaneously; NetShow's server-side program sends the correct one based on available bandwidth.

For commerce sites, NetShow's tight integration with NT Server is handy for tracking usage and integrating data into a billing system since it can log every event. Overall, NetShow Services 3.0 is more than worth the download time, and the price is right. But RealNetworks' soon-to-be-released G2 technology promises even better performance, finer controls, and more powerful server features, so stay tuned. GEOFFREY WILLIAMS

FILEBOX

NetShow Services 3.0

★★★

Verdict: Slick Net media player at a great price (free).

Pros: Fast encoding; lots of utilities; good server integration.

Cons: Low-bandwidth 28.8Kbps video is jerky.

Free
Microsoft
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RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

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Infolink 267 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

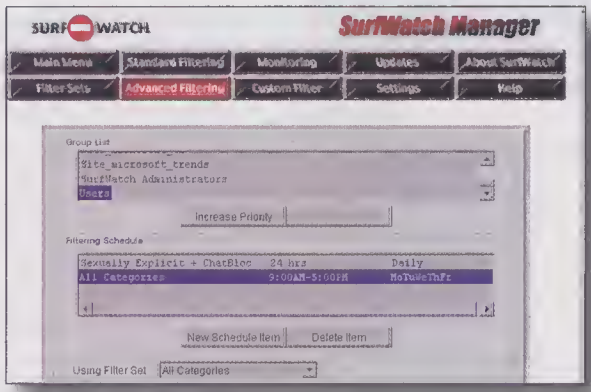
Put Office Surfers on Notice

Your employees use the Internet at the office only for business, right? Don't count on it. The lure of sports, music, shopping, gambling, entertainment, sex, and other distractions can be irresistible. Put irresponsible Web surfers on notice with SurfWatch Software's $995 SurfWatch Professional Edition.

Professional Edition helps your business in three ways—by conserving bandwidth, limiting liability, and improving productivity (although it might not do much for morale). After installing the software as a proxy server plug-in, you download a set of up-to-date content-blocking filters from SurfWatch Software's Web site.

Filter categories include everything from sex and violence to sports and shopping. ChatBlock filters include limits on Internet Relay Chat and other chat functions.

One problem with generic filtering is that some users within your organization may have a legitimate need to access certain categories of content. Luckily, SurfWatch lets you map filter sets to groups so they can bypass filters as needed. If you want a way to monitor and enforce your corporate Internet access, SurfWatch Professional Edition is exactly what you're looking for. CHRIS KINSMAN



Don't Go There Keep employees with Internet access on a short leash with SurfWatch Software's $995 SurfWatch Professional Edition.

FILEBOX

SurfWatch Professional Edition

★★★★

Verdict: If you must supervise employees' surfing, it's one of the best products around.

Pros: Flexible filtering for individuals and groups.

Cons: No automated updates.

From $995 (one server with 50 users) to $6,995 (one server with 10,000 users), est. street prices
SurfWatch Software
(800) 458-6600, (650) 948-9500
Enter 904 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

SouthSoft PMMail 98

Do-It-Yourself E-Mailer

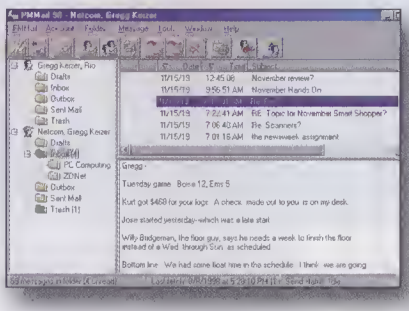
You're not getting any fewer e-mail messages. In fact, you're probably receiving more every day. PMMail 98 helps you survive the rush on your in-box.

PMMail 98 lets you send and receive messages in the background while you read or write new messages—something even the ultrapopular Qualcomm Eudora can't do, and a critical characteristic when minutes are precious.

This POP3/SMTP mailer handles multiple e-mail accounts, sports a three-pane interface so you can preview your messages, and has nested folders so organizing your mail is a cinch. The more expensive Professional edition integrates PGP (Pretty Good Privacy) encryption for your security.

While the program prides itself on its sophisticated filters, building a filter with more than two criteria is not possible without learning PMMail's complex scripting language. This programmer-like approach is certainly powerful, but it's suitable only for advanced users. Also, PMMail 98 supports minimal HTML—such as fonts, styles, and text colors—but can't display full Web pages.

When easier-to-use mailers cost nothing (Netscape Messenger, Microsoft Outlook Express), even shareware like PMMail 98 has a hard row to hoe. But if you're looking for cheap power and you're willing to settle for sharewarelike quirks, PMMail 98 might suit you just right. GREGG KEIZER



Letter Box PMMail 98 mixes powerful messaging features with an intuitive three-pane interface.

FILEBOX

PMMail 98

★★★

Verdict: A powerful e-mail client, but it skimps on usability.

Pros: Smart custom filters.

Cons: Not for novices.

$50 for Professional edition, $40 for Standard edition, est. street prices; 45-day trial after free download
SouthSoft
(800) 414-4268 (BMT Micro, distributor), (910) 792-9100
www.southsoft.com
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RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

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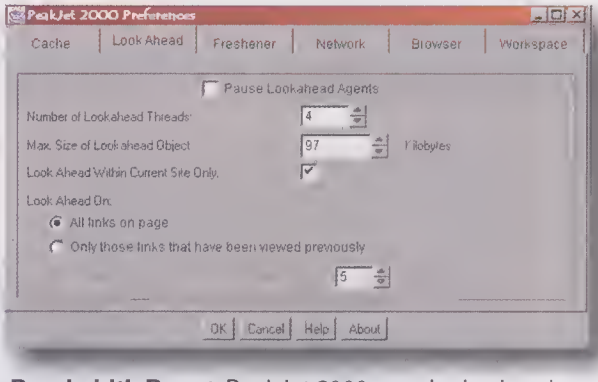
Speed Up Your Browsing

Surf the Web twice as fast—for just 30 bucks? Where do we sign up? That's the promise of the latest cache utility from PeakSoft, PeakJet 2000. It works mainly by using a technique called Look Ahead caching, which means that while you're reading a page PeakJet 2000 is busy pulling down linked pages, just in case you decide to click on one.

In our tests of PeakJet 2000, we noticed substantial speed improvements when browsing pages linked off a site's home page. If you browse from site to site by typing in destinations, however, you'll see little performance improvement.

Hit-or-miss acceleration aside, one of the best features of PeakJet 2000 lets you save entire Web-browsing sessions. It's a great tool for research, and when you open a saved session, PeakJet 2000 freshens the archived pages automatically. You can even import your existing bookmarks as part of the LinkClip feature, which lets you gather related links that can be browsed later offline.

What's missing? A cache-hit feature that gives you an objective measure of just how much time it has really saved you in a given session. Overall, PeakJet 2000 is a handy utility that—depending on how you browse—will give your Web connection a boost. And archiving related sites for offline viewing alone makes it worth the price. DAVID GERDING



Bandwidth Boost PeakJet 2000 uses look-ahead caching to preload linked Web pages onto your hard drive and speed browsing.

FILEBOX

PeakSoft PeakJet 2000

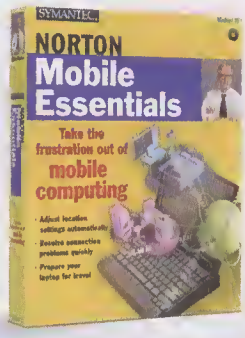
☆☆☆

Verdict: Double your Web connection speed for only 30 clams.

Pros: Speeds delivery of Web pages; offline viewing features.

Cons: Doesn't have cache-hit feature to measure time savings.

$30 est. street price
PeakSoft
(888) 377-7325, (360) 752-1100
Enter 906 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink



Don't Lose It On The Road.

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Now you don't have to lose your connections, your critical data, your valuable time – or your mind – every time you hit the road. That's because Norton Mobile Essentials™ takes the frustration out of mobile computing. It lets you instantly adjust location settings so you're immediately connected. And it quickly resolves connection problems to minimize downtime. What's more, it prepares you for your trip by checking which adapters you'll need, quickly backing up your critical data, and providing destination information via the Web. So, the next time you travel for business, don't lose it. Use it.

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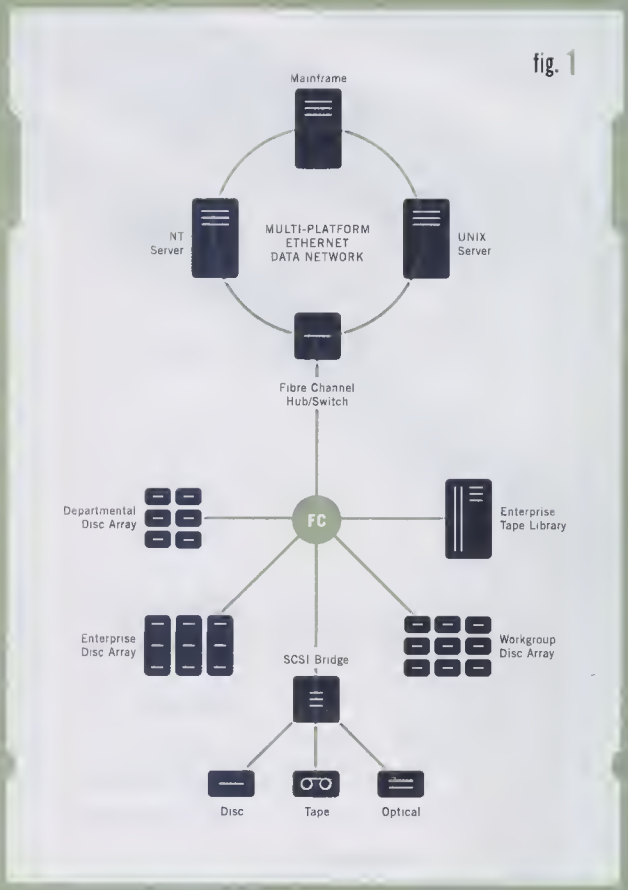
Infolink 165 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Every year, the amount of data you store doubles.

If you use the Internet, it doubles every six months.

NOW MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME TO TALK about revolutionary new ways to store information.



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Infolink 156 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

By Ron White

Toys, Toys, Toys!

I'm a middle-aged kid. To me Christmas still means toys. Oh, sure, when I get a sweater or a tie, I grin like a good boy and pretend I'm absolutely thrilled. Oh, just what I wanted! Of course what I really want are toys—preferably digital toys. Here are some toys on CD-ROM that won't disappoint even the most juvenile adult on your shopping list. Several are perfect to show off that new 3-D–accelerated PC that may be under the tree. In fact, some insist on a high-powered computer with fast video. All of them need more memory than an elephant and consume storage space faster than Linda Tripp's tape recorder. I've even thrown in a few games that children will enjoy. And just for the Grinch that lurks among us all, there's a warning about one CD-ROM game to avoid like a firefight—a real one.

INCOMING ●●●●●

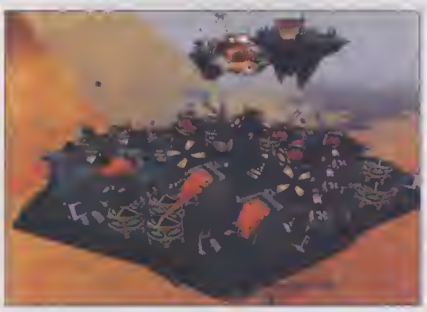
I'm not sure if Incoming is a game or a work of art. Where other 3-D shooters achieve a decent frame rate with murky, distant images and fudged details that create low-contrast, vague images, Incoming is crisp and clear, and lovely—if you find loveliness in alien landscapes and exploding UFOs. My favorite effect: When a UFO, a chopper, or a plane is destroyed, the explosion spreads as a growing halo of light. It's enough to make destruction a thing of beauty. Not that this is some namby-pamby, sissy game. Incoming has lots of action as you defend Earth's NASA installation from attacks by flying saucers. The action changes from stationary defense guns to tanks to flying ships as you defend levels from Florida to the Arctic to the moon. It is a tremendous action game and the most beautiful way to die.

Artful Aliens **Pretty, but don't linger on Incoming's loveliness or you're sky kill.**

Incoming / Rage Software / www.rage.co.uk / $38 est. street price / *Enter 821 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

STRATOSPHERE ●●●●●

Stratosphere: Conquest of the Skies gives CD games a badly needed infusion of imagination. Yes, it involves shooting and explosions and destruction, but the premise is so delightful and graceful that it transforms the art of war-gaming. In Stratosphere you build castles in the sky, literally. Giant fortresses armed with cannons, catapults, thrusters, and a bit of magic roam the world on giant hunks of "floatstone." Movement is graceful and elegant, even peacefully slow—a contrast to most other games that require split-nanosecond reactions. There's also the pleasure of creating your own fortress. There's no blood, and the game's unlikely to raise your blood pressure. If you're tired of the current game clichés, take a ride on Stratosphere.



Land Ho! **Castles in the sky duke it out in Stratosphere: Conquest of the Skies.**

Stratosphere: Conquest of the Skies / Ripcord Games / (888) 797-5867, (408) 653-1897 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 822 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

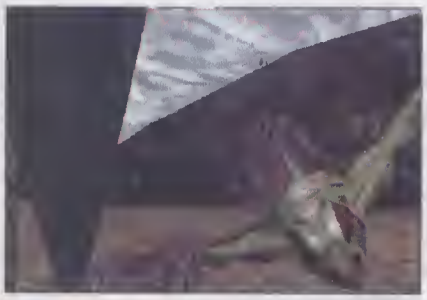
TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX ●●●●●

I'll tell you a secret: I enjoy Tom Clancy novels. Sure, they make G. Gordon Liddy look like a bleeding-heart sap, but Clancy gives his novels such a feel of authenticity and detail, that I find myself suckered into the whole hairy-chested fantasy. Rainbow Six gets the full Clancy treatment, and the result is—I hate to say this—a thinking man's shooter. As second-in-command of a secret antiterrorist group, you choose teammates, select equipment, and plan the assault. Pick the wrong strategy and it won't matter how good a shot you are. In fact, the action segments can wind up short and fast if you don't plan your assault right. The dedication to realism—or Clancy's version anyway—is found not only in the detailed 3-D, but also in the action details. For instance, when you fire multiple rounds, accuracy goes down because the gun is jerking. Make no mistake. This is not a game you play. It's a game you learn and practice and practice till you get it right, soldier.

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six / Red Storm Entertainment / (800) 595-8695 / $49 est. street price / *Enter 823 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

RATINGS: ●●●●● SANTA'S WHOLE SACK ●●●● SHINY RED WAGON ●●● SAME AS LAST YEAR ●● FRUITCAKE ● LUMP OF COAL



Watch Your Head! **Danger comes from all directions in Unreal.**

UNREAL ●●●●●

Unreal it is. This 3-D game is the most elaborate creation among Quake-type shooters, making heavy demands on your PC's hardware. If you don't have a Pentium II and a 3-D accelerator card, look elsewhere for your thrills. (Unreal recommends at least a 266MHz Pentium II, 32MB of RAM, a Voodoo 3-D card, and 450MB of disk space for a full install.) But if your PC is machine enough to take on Unreal's detailed graphics, sweeping landscapes, breathtaking lighting and water effects, plus a savvy enemy artificial intelligence, this is a rare treat to be savored. The back story is that you're a prisoner on a space freighter, and the only survivor after it crashes on a world where you're definitely not welcome. I found fighting to be an annoyance. I prefer to explore deep canyons, tumbling waterfalls, caves, and valleys. In addition to the requisite monsters, the world is populated by small and harmless—I think—fish and creatures that add ambience to the settings. There's also a death-match mode, network play, and a game editor to create your own levels. The play is basically the same as in other shooters. Hard-core gamers will find it lacking in imaginative action—although the small, flying dragons are a nice touch—but the visuals served up by its demanding 3-D engine make it worth the battle.

Unreal / GT Interactive / (800) 610-4847, (212) 726-6500 / $55 est. street price / *Enter 824 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

URBAN ASSAULT ●●●●●

If you want to make war instead of love. . . .Well, first, I think you have a serious problem, but that aside, there are two ways to make war in PC gaming. One is to hop into an over-the-shoulder shooter like Quake or Mech Warrior. The other is to be a general and command the troops à la Total Annihilation. Or you can have both in Urban Assault. Die-hard players of either genre may think Urban Assault doesn't go far enough in either direction. But someone looking for quick thrills instead of long campaigns will get addicted to Urban Assault. The premise is an Earth nearly destroyed and under attack by aliens and hostile humans. Your job is to use tanks, airplanes, helicopters, jeeps, or any of 11 other war machines to capture territory. You create and deploy squadrons. Or—and this is highly recommended—jump into one of the vehicles

War Games **Battle on the ground or in the air, as a general or a battle ace in Urban Assault.**

and join the battle in accelerated 3-D. Your loyal troops will follow you. The game reminds me of Fury, a Microsoft flying combat title perfect for people who don't want to spend time mastering all the realism of a real jet simulator. Urban Assault doesn't require intense study to master, but it's challenging enough to keep your war going longer than Desert Storm.

Urban Assault / Microsoft / (800) 426-9400, (425) 882-8080 / $55 est. street price / *Enter 825 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

JAZZ JACKRABBIT 2 ●●●●

What's this? A side scroller in the midst of all this 3-D, go-anywhere virtual reality? A side-scrolling game where the protagonist can go only left, right, and jump is *so* retro. Even Mario doesn't side-scroll these days. A game like this can't be fun. And to prove it, I played Jazz Jackrabbit 2 for hours. You know what? It ain't bad. The action is faster and furiouser than you'll find in Quake. There's no blood, just a rabbit looking for treasures floating in the air, and now and then shooting a troublesome turtle who hides

Silly Rabbit **What better obstacle for a jazzy rabbit than a wild brier patch?**

in his shell instead of splattering. If you've got kids who spend all their time with Nintendo or PlayStation, show them what a PC can do when it's unleashed against their young reflexes. If you don't have kids, well, just get it.

Jazz Jackrabbit 2 / Gathering of Developers / (877) 463-4263 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 826 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

MOTOCROSS MADNESS ●●●●

Among my more insane daydreams is riding a motorcycle. I've tried this twice—and twice wound up leaving my hide on the roadway. Motocross Madness lets me keep my dreams and skin at the same time. The game requires 3-D acceleration and is fussy about what kind. It didn't really like my graphics adapter, and let me know it with big areas of solid color where there should have been the textures of a desert dirt-bike track. Even with the display flaws, though, the game is a hoot, especially if you're using a force-feedback joystick. The leaning that's an essential part of real biking adapts naturally to the feedback forces. The game comes with lots of bikes, riders, and tracks—which consist mostly of sandy

Rev It Up **Don't be left behind at the starting line in Motocross Madness. Go! You'll survive.**

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Street Atlas USA® *6.0* is the original CD-ROM mapping product and has led the pack since 1991. This new version offers unsurpassed detail, street address search power, door-to-door routing and the tools needed to print customized maps. We've added 600,000 new streets or street names as well as a new VIA feature that lets you right-click on preferred roads and have the program automatically route via your selections. We've expanded our exit services information so you can find the nearest restaurant, ATM or RV-friendly stop. You can even download maps and routes to Windows® CE and 3Com® Palm Computing® handheld computers. Add our convenient Web links and GPS compatibility and *Street Atlas USA 6.0* provides street smarts in any neighborhood.

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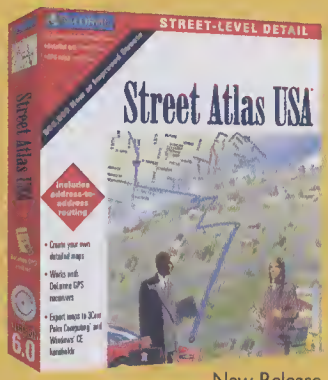
"DeLorme *Street Atlas USA* provides the best navigational tools…DeLorme's robust support of satellite navigation and automatic route creation make this well-balanced program the best choice." —*National Software Testing Lab*

Create custom routes with new VIA feature

Print detailed maps with address-to-address routing



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Infolink 147 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

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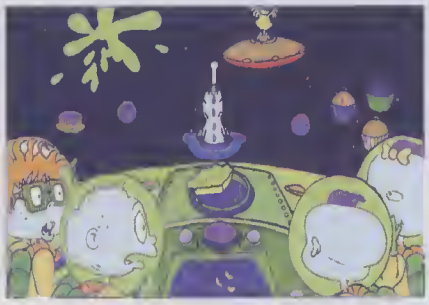
hills and tricky obstacles. It has Net play too. Even when you take a spill, the experience is real enough to be fun, but virtual enough to leave you intact.

Motocross Madness / Microsoft / (800) 426-9400, (425) 882-8080 / $55 est. street price / *Enter 827 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*



Attention, Kids **What's all the crying about? Rugrats make it to CD-ROM.**

RUGRATS ADVENTURE GAME ●●●●

What do I make of this? In Rugrats Adventure Game, which is geared for kids ages six to ten, I couldn't solve the first challenge—how to get the babies who star in the CD out of their playpen. I was given a hint soon enough—although I wasn't thrilled that the tools the Rugrats use are kept in their diapers. I didn't even like going near diapers when my kids were in them. The game based on the No. 1 show on Nickelodeon, and now a movie, is pretty much a TV segment interspersed with puzzles fit for preschoolers. Not bad. Not exciting. But then I'm at that awkward age between diapers and Depends, when I can only imagine what little kids like. (Barney? Spice Girls? Don't get me started.) I suspect any ten-year-old wouldn't be caught dead playing this instead of Mortal Kombat. But if you've got a Rugrats fan in the family, here's the CD to get.

Rugrats Adventure Game / Broderbund Kids Studio / (800) 521-6263, (415) 382-4400 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 828 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

COSMIC CAPERS ●●●

There are two types of people who'll like Cosmic Capers Animated Jigsaws: kids glued to the Cartoon Network eight hours a day who can't get enough, and adults who wish they were (maybe some adults are). The concept for Cosmic Capers is flimsy: You make jigsaw puzzles out of frames from assorted Warner Bros. cartoons. When the picture is assembled, it morphs into an animated video. The cosmic bit comes from the fact that the CD raids cartoons that feature Marvin the Martian, Bugs Bunny, and Daffy Duck in outer-space locations. (There are three other titles: Assorted Nuts, Merrie Masquerades, and Wuv & Marriage.) The puzzles can be made easy enough for a preschooler or too difficult for a Ph.D. And frankly, the puzzles aren't as much fun as the animations or converting

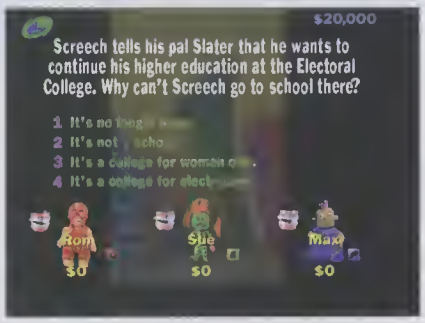
Martian, Don't Go Home **Marvin, Daffy, and Bugs are all broken up about Cosmic Capers Animated Jigsaws.**

frames to wallpaper. But considering that Warner cartoons are the great underappreciated art form of the 20th century, I'll take whatever I can get.

Looney Tunes Cosmic Capers Animated Jigsaws / SouthPeak Interactive / (800) 774-6183, (919) 677-4499 / $20 est. street price / *Enter 829 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

HEADRUSH ●●●

Berkeley Systems has been putting out great trivia games in its BeZerk You Don't Know Jack series. The only problem is that the games require you to know a lot of common trivia. This obviously alienates most teenagers, who can't tell you about anything that happened before Nine Inch Nails. So now we have HeadRush, a Jack-styled Q&A game with questions more suited to the walking oblivion that is adolescence. Lots of TV and music references. Think of it as a game with the wit of a drive-time DJ combined with the philosophical musings of MTV.



Hey Dude **Up to snuff on your teenage stuff? Let HeadRush be the judge.**

HeadRush / Berkeley Systems / (800) 757-7707, (510) 540-5535 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 830 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

NAM ●

Don't get me wrong. I'm all for invading underdeveloped countries and killing off a few hundred thousand innocent people as much as the next guy, but Nam gives me a queasy feeling that's hard to shake. I'm only reviewing it in hope of saving you from the same sickness. The game's claim to fame is that it's based on some version of the Doom 3-D engine that the Marines apparently use to create their own virtual battle simulations. The fact that Nam doesn't look more realistic compared with more recent 3-D games doesn't stop it from reminding you of the realism that was the Vietnam War. I can't imagine anyone who was actually in Vietnam finding pleasure in reenacting it. For game violence and mayhem to be tolerable, much less fun, there needs to be a good element of fantasy, of make-believe—a reassurance that this is, after all, nothing more than color pixels glowing on the screen. Nam is too tasteless, even for someone like me.

Nam / GT Interactive / (800) 610-4847, (212) 726-6500 / $20 est. street price / *Enter 831 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Nam Flashback **All the fun and thrills of killing off a peasant population are yours in Nam. Not.**

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CAMBRIDGE SOUNDWORKS

PCWorks™ FourPointSurround™

Sound Blaster® Live!™ features:

> Hollywood-quality re-creation with an astounding -120dB noise floor > E-mu's most powerful audio processor with 1000+MIPS and 8-point interpolation > Digital I/O card for easy connection to music keyboards and digital audio recorders > Environmental Audio™ — enhances all audio content from the past, present, and future > Live!ware program provides updates over life of product > Hundreds of cool new and upcoming titles with EAX™ support

Cambridge SoundWorks® PCWorks™ FourPointSurround™ features:

> Four compact satellite speakers and a powered subwoofer > Rear surround speakers can be placed anywhere with the included tripod stands and wall mounting accessories > In-line master volume control for all four satellite speakers and subwoofer > Delivers discrete 4-channel surround audio with Microsoft® DirectSound®3D and Creative's Environmental Audio eXtensions™ games

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"With the ability to do real-time effects, a bevy of digital connectors, and budding support for EAX™, the Live! is a winner..."

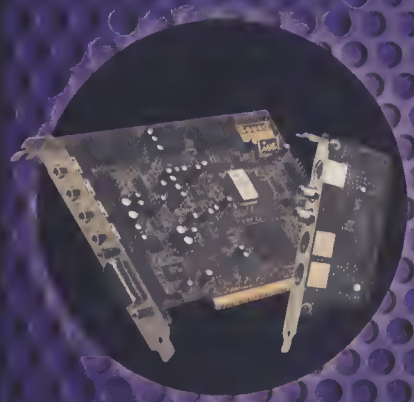
— Maximum PC, October 1998
Maximum PC Verdict 10

MAXIMUM PC KICK ASS! product

"Sound quality that's nearly impossible to match at this price... Possibly the best buy in PC audio."

— PC Gamer, October 1998
PCWorks™ FourPointSurround™

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE



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the Live! experience.

Live the experience!

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Buckle up and brace yourself for the visual ride of your life! 3D Blaster® Banshee explodes with rocket-fast 2D performance, startling 3D frame rates, and break-neck video acceleration with an absolutely out-of-this-world price.

Its screaming speed comes from the 128-bit 3Dfx Voodoo Banshee™ processor, which offers Voodoo2™-like performance. A full 16MB of 100MHz synchronous memory and a 250MHz RAMDAC gives you ultra-high resolution and millions of colors. With DirectX®, Glide® and 3Dfx OpenGL® drivers, tuned for compatibility with the widest range of applications and games, this affordable, easy-to-install graphics accelerator is a must for every PC. It's a gamer's dream come true, that doesn't break the bank!

Graphics Blaster® RIVA TNT delivers blood-curdling performance. It's packed with workstation power whether you're a hard-core gamer or a hot-shot 3D designer. An ultra-wide, 128-bit memory architecture and 16MB of high-performance 125MHz synchronous memory supported by a TwiN-Texel, 32-bit color 2D/3D engine that has all the toys: bump mapping, multiple texturing, and even full-screen anti-aliasing. When you need to work with incredible precision and play games with liquid-smooth speed, Graphics Blaster® RIVA TNT is what you've been waiting for.

3D Blaster® Banshee features:

> Complete 2D/3D graphics solution based on the new Voodoo Banshee™ chipset from 3Dfx Interactive® > Features a full 128-bit graphics engine and Voodoo2™ 3D rendering technology > 16MB of SDRAM and 250MHz DAC deliver awe-inspiring resolutions, rock-solid refresh rates, and stunning visual quality > Boosts your PC's performance and provides compatibility with the widest range of applications and games in a single, cost effective upgrade

Graphics Blaster® RIVA TNT features:

> World-class 2D/3D, and video acceleration using the RIVA TNT processor from nVIDIA® > Ultra-wide, high speed 128-bit memory architecture and TwiN-Texel 3D pipeline deliver mind-numbing speed in virtually any application > 16MB 125MHz synchronous memory and a powerful 250MHz DAC provide incredibly high resolutions and refresh rates for brilliant, vivid images > Perfect platform for the power-user, gamer or graphic designer

"After mercilessly putting our 3D Blaster through its paces, we can happily and heartily recommend it."

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

— PC Gamer, May 1998
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— C/NET, February 1998
5-Star Gameworthy Review, PC-DVD Encore Dxr™2

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FUTURE WINDO

BY ED BOTT

Someday soon you'll be able to choose an operating system that configures your hardware for you. Connecting to the Internet will take three clicks, tops. Your IS staff will upgrade an entire department full of PCs overnight. And if a novice user accidentally deletes a crucial file, the system will repair itself automatically.

Oh, by the way, it's called Microsoft Windows.

What? You're skeptical? Given Microsoft's reputation for overpromising and underdelivering on OS upgrades, we don't blame you.

That's why we spent the past year investigating where Windows is going. We found plenty of clues in recent beta releases of Windows NT 5.0 and Office 2000. The former combines the rock-steady NT kernel with the usability enhancements of Windows 98, while the latter introduces revolutionary interface enhancements.

Is the operating system you've been waiting for just around the corner?

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVEN LYONS

- **Plug and Play** that really works. The secret? Full support for modern bus architectures—PCI, PC Cards, and USB. A big bonus: superb power management for the latest desktop and notebook models.
- **Web integration** that delivers one seamless interface for browsing local files, intranets, and the Internet.
- **One-step management** through a customizable console that lets you control computers, peripherals, users, security settings, and more—from any desktop.
- **Directory services** that handle all the tasks of managing users, groups, shared peripherals, and security, even over enormous worldwide networks.
- **Serious security,** including support for smart cards and other physical keys, plus an encrypted file system strong enough to impress even professional spooks.

WS

View from The Top

Although it's barely over three years old, the Windows 95 interface has evolved dramatically in that time. Yes, the Start button and the Taskbar are still there, but most other aspects of the interface have changed to reflect the influence of the Internet—and there are many more changes in store. The latest beta releases of Windows NT 5.0 and Office 2000 offer a preview of what we can expect in future Windows versions. Some of the interface enhancements are simply eye candy, like pop-up menus that fade in and out on Pentium IIs. Others are usability-inspired improvements that replace related dialog boxes scattered throughout Windows with simple all-in-one control centers.

At least two planned changes to the Windows interface are radical, and likely to be controversial. Personalized menus hide commands you rarely use and show only those you've used lately—Office 2000 offers a peek at this innovation, which extends to the Start menu in NT 5.0. Likewise, NT 5.0 and Office 2000 share new-look Open and Save As dialog boxes; in theory, you can use the icons on the Places bar to browse common locations quickly, locally or on the network, without having to step through complex hierarchies.

If you poke around in the properties sheets for files and folders, you'll also find evidence of dramatic changes in the Windows architecture. NT 5.0 fully supports the FAT32 file system, which is good news for anyone who wants to dual-boot between Windows 95/98 and NT. To unlock all the features of the new operating system, though, you'll want to convert drives to NTFS 5.0.

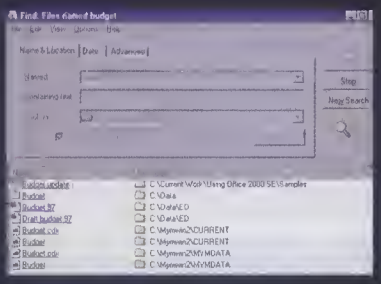
As part of its installation process, NT 5.0 automatically upgrades all NTFS drives; there's no way to keep the older NTFS version, although a special driver makes it possible to dual-boot NT 4.0 and NT 5.0. Using the newer NTFS, you can turn on the Encrypted File System option, which makes it virtually impossible for a thief to tap into your data without a password—even if they steal your notebook or rip the hard drive right out of your machine. Best of all, the new NTFS lets you store custom attributes with any file. As applications take advantage of this new capability, you'll benefit, because you'll no longer need to use file extensions to associate apps and data files.

Web Worthy Our beta release of NT 5.0 included a sneak peek at Internet Explorer 5.0. Although the browser upgrade we saw was far from finished, it's clear that IE 5.0 will closely resemble its predecessor. Basic

Before & After Managing Files

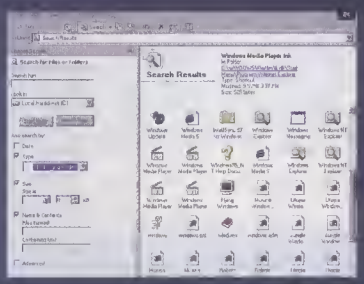
Even for experienced users, DOS-style file extensions and cumbersome directory trees make finding and opening files unpleasant. There's a solution in store that uses a new Windows file system and a new default data location, the My Documents folder.

Before

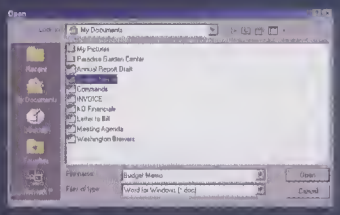


With current Windows versions, there's no way to find a file using Explorer. Instead you have to open this confusing three-tabbed dialog box and enter multiple parameters.

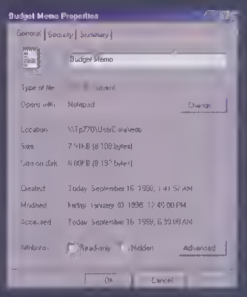
After



The new HTML-based Search page lets you find files without leaving an Explorer window. Click on the link at the top of the window to jump to the folder that contains the found file.



Like Office 2000, future versions of Windows will use these radically redesigned common dialog boxes. The Places bar (left) offers one-click access to frequently used locations.



Beginning next year, Windows file systems will store links to applications directly within each data file.

How It Works: Smart Card Authentication

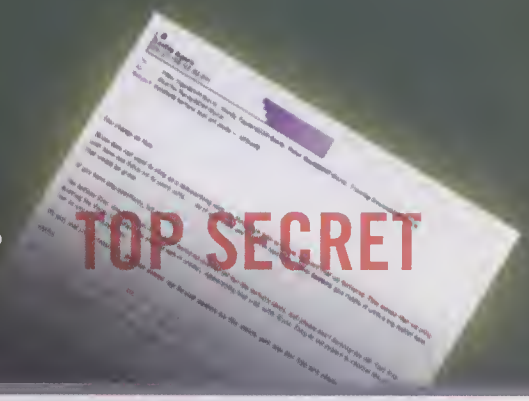
Future versions of Windows will include support for smart card authentication devices, which include a processor and enough memory to store local data. If file system encryption is turned on, your data is absolutely private.

PASSWORD ****

Password Like an ATM card, a stolen smart card is no good without its PIN. Before the smart card lets you use its encrypted keys, you have to supply a password. In ultrasecure environments, you can combine smart cards with physical authentication devices like fingerprint readers.

Decryption Windows decrypts your files, but only after you successfully provide both the smart card's private key and your public key. Removing the smart card from its slot locks the system, and the only way back in is with the same smart card.

Encryption The smart card holds private keys, passwords, and other secret information, as well as trusted certificates and the addresses of shared certificate stores. Because the card itself can encrypt and decrypt keys, secret data never leaves the card.



browsing functions are essentially the same, and the most noticeable change is a spiffy new interface for organizing favorites. (Netscape devotees and U.S. attorneys will be pleased to hear we had no problems installing the most recent version of Communicator and configuring it as our default browser.)

IE 5.0 also does away with some of the uglier mistakes of the Active Desktop, version 1.0. Beginning with Beta 2 of NT 5.0, you won't need to clear the useless Channel bar from your desktop—it's been retired. You can still add Web content to your desktop, but the interface is easier to use. And if you want to replace your desktop wallpaper with IE's home page, that option is just a click away. This configuration works well, leaving room for a row of icons along the left edge of the desktop.

With each succeeding iteration of Internet Explorer, Microsoft ties the Web browser and file management functions together more tightly. By this time next year, like it or not, the transformation should be complete. In NT 5.0, there are dozens of Web-style views that pop up in Explorer—most notably an HTML-based replacement for the Find Files dialog box. And unlike every current version of Windows, there's no way to disable Web View.

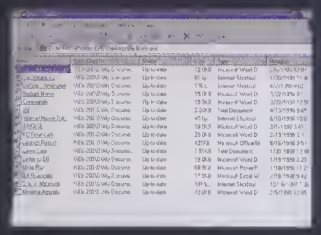
Hardware Made Easier In Windows 95, Plug and Play is far from perfect, and in Windows NT 4.0 it barely exists. So why should you expect the next generation of Windows to do a better job with configuring new devices? Because hardware manufacturers, prodded by Microsoft and Intel, have finally figured out how to do things right. Up-to-date bus architectures—including PCI, AGP, USB, and PC Card—are much better behaved than older ISA architectures. In fact, on a system that doesn't include any legacy devices, you should never encounter an IRQ, DMA, or port conflict.

Windows 95 and 98 scatter hardware configuration tools all over your system; NT 5.0 brings them all together under one Control Panel icon. Open Device Manager to drill down for details about resources and drivers. Use the Add Hardware wizard to set up non–Plug and Play devices. Click on the

Before & After: Mobile Computing

Tired of watching over batteries and copying files from desktop to notebook?

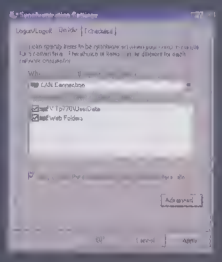
Before



Using Windows 95's clunky Briefcase utility to sync crucial working files between your notebook and desktop PC is a mess. It's probably easier and faster to FedEx a floppy.

After

Ditch your old APM notebook and get one that supports the Advanced Configuration and Peripheral Interface (ACPI) instead.



troubleshooter option to resolve resource conflicts associated with legacy devices. Microsoft clearly has more usability work to do—running through the Add New Hardware Wizard in Beta 2, for example, took more than a dozen clicks, including a few aggravating and unnecessary detection steps. But you can expect to spend increasingly less time tinkering with hardware in future versions of Windows.

How do you know the latest device driver you downloaded is compatible with your version of Windows? Today, there's no way to tell. Beginning next year, though, you'll be able to check a signature file to be sure the driver has received an OK from Microsoft's Windows Hardware Quality Lab. Administrators can set a policy that allows only signed drivers; the signature doesn't tamper with the driver code itself, but instead resides in an encrypted companion file.

And by this time next year NT users won't feel like second-class citizens when it comes to hardware support: NT 5.0 includes support for every class of device supported in Windows 98, including DirectX 6 video, DVD players, and peripherals that hook up to USB and FireWire (IEEE 1394) ports.

Mobile Power In theory, Windows 98 fully supports PCs and notebooks built around the Advanced Configuration and Power Interface (ACPI). That may be true, but few people have been able to reap the benefits of improved power management, because the final ACPI spec wasn't released until August of this year. Getting Win98 and NT 5.0 to work with our ACPI-enabled IBM ThinkPad 600 and 770E wasn't easy, but after a BIOS upgrade and some twiddling with CMOS settings we saw the ACPI payoff firsthand, and the results were impressive. Windows controls every aspect of power management including operation of power buttons and notebook covers, and battery life measurements were unfailingly accurate.

To hot-swap PC Cards on a notebook running NT 4.0, you need third-party utilities. Under NT 5.0, Plug and Play handles the details of loading drivers, making the experience as simple as a Win95 user would expect.

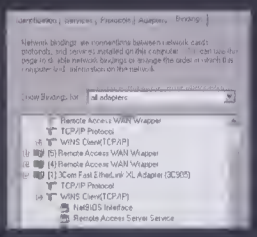
And how do you keep files in sync between a notebook and a desktop or network? After seeing NT 5.0's Off-line Synchronization Manager, we understand why Microsoft abandoned the staggeringly unusable Briefcase. There's no more moving files to some artificial folder; instead you simply check a box telling Windows you want to make a file, folder, or Web page available offline. Synchronization happens in the background. (To make certain all your files are up to date, you can also force synchronization using a simple utility.)

Before & After

Net Connections

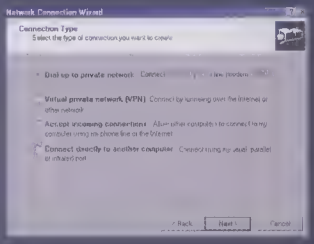
Microsoft has added Windows networking a bit at a time through the years, and it shows.

Before



Adding a new LAN card to NT 4.0 takes hardware, software, and some powerful mojo. Oh, and you'll need to reboot if you so much as look at this dialog box.

After



This slick NT 5.0 wizard lets you build any connection—complete with logon names, security settings, and preferred protocols—and most tasks don't require you to reboot.

Behind the Scenes

When we brought Windows NT 4.0 into *PC Computing*'s Usability Labs a few months ago, our testers delivered an emphatic thumbs-down verdict. NT 5.0 cleans up one of the most frustrating usability quagmires, configuring a new network adapter. Adding a new LAN adapter sets up a network connection automatically, and you can adjust its settings by right-clicking on its icon in the Network Connections dialog box. Launch the Network Connection Wizard for other types of links: dial-up connections to an ISP, for example, or virtual private networking using Point-to-Point Tunneling Protocol.

Anyone who's tried to find a file on a large corporate network knows the frustration of trying to find the right shared folder in a Network Neighborhood with hundreds of server icons. Beginning next year, the Network Neighborhood vanishes, replaced by a streamlined shell folder linked to a desktop icon called My Network Places. Although the new location hides server icons, it doesn't help end users as much as it aids administrators, who can populate the new folder with predefined shortcuts for shared drives and folders.

Managing a single computer gets a little easier with each new version of Windows, too. Windows 98 tucks a set of diagnostic utilities into the Administrative Tools menu. With NT 5.0, you can fire up the Computer

family/work/you
work/you/family
you/family/work

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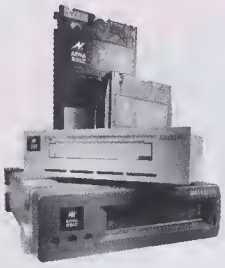
aiwa

*(Your work has to be worth more than a pepperoni pizza.)



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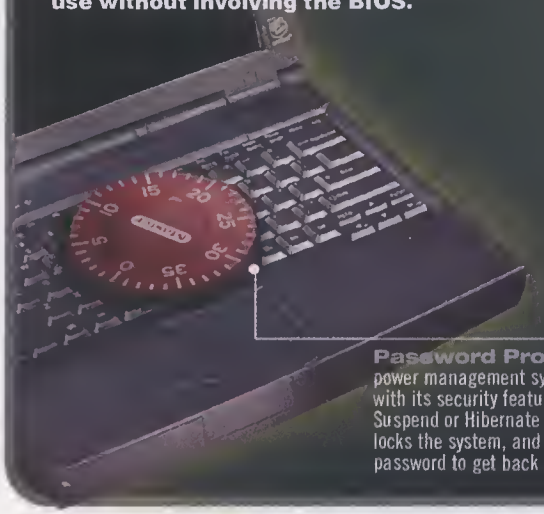
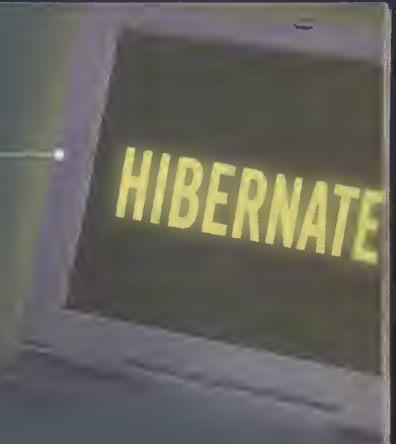
How It Works Power Management

Windows 98 introduced support for systems that use the Advanced Configuration and Peripheral Interface (ACPI), and NT 5.0 will take power management to the next level. On an ACPI machine, the OS manages power use without involving the BIOS.



Defined States Because the ACPI specifications clearly define power states (S1=full power, S2=50%, and so on), there's no chance of shutting down a hardware device until the rest of the system is ready.



Power-Aware Apps Because Windows completely manages battery and CPU use on an ACPI system, you can expect longer battery life and more accurate reports of how much time is remaining. Power-aware applications like Office 2000 will help squeeze extra minutes out of a battery as well.

Password Protected NT 5.0's power management system tightly integrates with its security features. When you choose Suspend or Hibernate on a notebook, Windows locks the system, and you have to supply a password to get back in.

Management utility for quick access to drives, devices, and system services. This predefined set of snap-ins to the Microsoft Management Console lets you manage the PC in front of you or connect to another workstation on the network. NT experts will save time by not having to hop from one utility to another for daily tasks, but everyday users will still be baffled by the bewildering detail and jargon they'll find here.

When all else fails, NT 5.0 finally offers the safety net that Windows 95 and 98 users depend on: a Safe Mode boot that gives you access to basic configuration tools. You'll still need to log on with a valid user account and password—unlike Windows 98, this doesn't offer a backdoor to bypass system security.

Central Command On networks that use NT 5.0 at the server and the workstation, dozens of new management features are available. What makes life easier for administrators, of course, can give power users big headaches. For example:

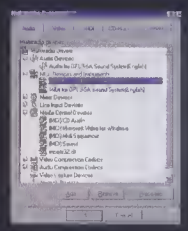
- Security-conscious administrators can enforce strict log-in controls with newly added support for industry-standard authentication schemes like Kerberos, a Unix-standard authentication method originally developed at MIT. Gadget freaks can insist on smart card readers, which use public- and private-key encryption techniques to lock out hackers.
- Administrators can hide storage details from users by turning on the Distributed File System option. Instead of saving a file to a server and share name, users simply specify a location name, which might consist of several drives on widely scattered servers. If administrators run out of room, they can add a new drive to the virtual location, without ever shutting down a server.
- If you've been saving *South Park* videos to your NT network, you're about to be busted. On an NT 5.0 server, administrators can set quotas on the amount of disk space each user can chew up. You'll get a nasty warning (and set off an alarm on your IS director's desktop) if you exceed the allowed space.
- Roaming profiles are easier to work with in NT 5.0 than ever before. That means you can log into your account from any workstation and see the applications, data files, and personal settings you expect.

Before & After

Installing Hardware

Will Plug and Play ever work? Only after you've discarded all those ancient PCs and ISA peripherals.

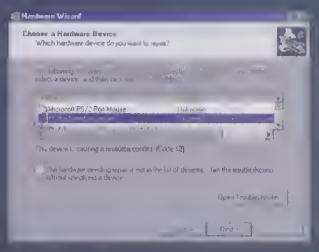
Before



Windows has more hardware utilities than there are former Soviet republics. In NT 4.0, even the simplest upgrade takes two trips to the Control Panel and a couple of reboots.

After

Beginning next year, handle all your hardware chores from one central location without rebooting. Inspect device settings, update drivers, or troubleshoot resource conflicts.



Info Center Managing NT 4.0–style domains gets increasingly difficult as a network grows, and the task turns into a nightmare when you need to reorganize a network or move users from one location to another. Those headaches vanish completely with NT 5.0, which replaces the old-style domains with new organizational structures based on the Internet-standard Domain Naming System (DNS) and Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP).

At the heart and soul of the new network architecture is Microsoft's Active Directory. Unlike the old NT user database, the Active Directory can store information about any type of object, including user accounts and computers, along with its security settings. Although it's new for the operating system, the underlying architecture has evolved from the Exchange Directory Service, so it's well tested in practice. Microsoft claims that a single directory service can handle well over a million objects, making it suitable for use even in large global networks. But network administrators have a right to be skeptical.

By defining organizational units and grouping users together, NT 5.0's Group Policy Editor lets you carefully manage what users can and can't do. On our test network, we found the process significantly easier than it ever was in previous versions of NT—but you'll need weeks of training to master the intricacies of this complex set of tools.

Big-Picture Payoffs

Want to write your own ticket in corporate America? Don't bother with an MBA or Ph.D. Instead, get an MCSE. Officially, that acronym means you've passed the test to be a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, but what it really means is you know how to keep a Windows NT network up and running—and you can charge top dollar for those services.

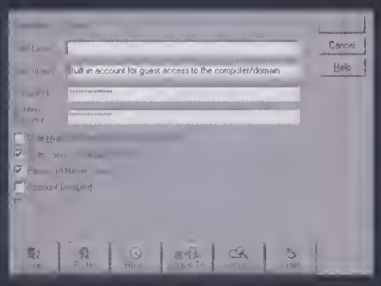
If you're the one who pays those staggering invoices for MCSEs, you'll need to keep that line item in next year's budget, but NT 5.0 should let you cut your support bills substantially. The new Windows Installer Service, for example, cuts an hour or more from the time it takes to set up a single PC. Booting directly from the CD-ROM, you can run through every setup option with just a few clicks and even fewer reboots.

Other routine maintenance tasks take less time, too, with dramatically fewer forced reboots than with NT 4.0. By the time NT 5.0 is ready for commercial release, in fact, Microsoft promises to eliminate all but a handful of user scenarios that require you to pay an MCSE to watch a PC reboot. In Beta 2, there are nearly 50 tasks that no longer pop up the "You must reboot to make this change effective" dialog box.

Before & After Managing PCs and Users

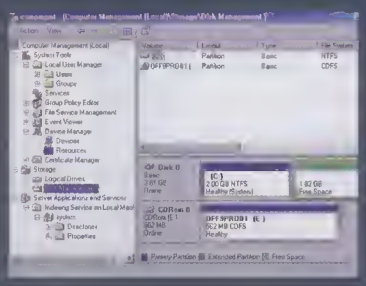
Managing a Windows PC today is like babysitting a hyperactive child—you can't afford to let your guard down for one minute. In future versions of Windows, you'll be able to keep a PC or even a network up and running with a complete management toolkit.

Before

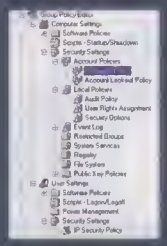


Today, managing a network takes forever. After you define a user account, you have to click on each of six buttons to set basic policies, then open the Registry Editor to finish the job.

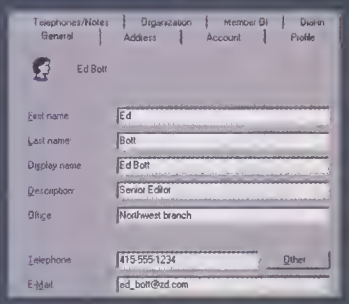
After



The all-new Microsoft Management Console lets you snap together a custom set of management tools—no more wandering through Control Panel in search of the right utility.



Want to keep users from getting into trouble and lock intruders out of your network? Use NT 5.0's all-in-one Security Editor.



The secret of network success is the new Active Directory, which stores details about every user, machine, and policy in one central location.

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"Right

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If you've been holding out for the cable or telephone company to bring high-speed Internet access to your neighborhood, chances are it's been a while. Which is a shame, because if you'd chosen DirecPC, you could be surfing at up to 400 Kbps **right now**. That's up to 14 times faster than a standard 28.8 modem and almost three times faster than an ISDN line.

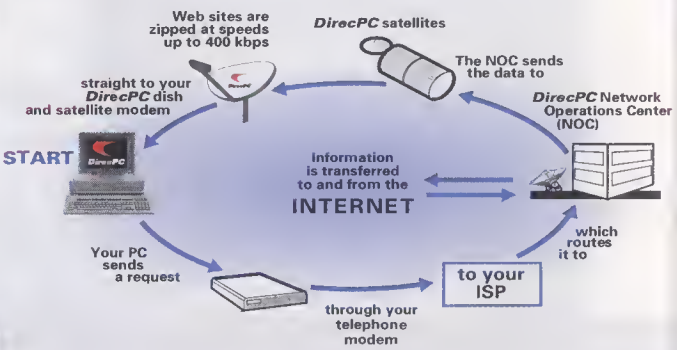
It's easy.

How do you get started? Just visit us at www.direcpc.com to find a retailer near you. If you can't find a store in the neighborhood, call us at 1-800-DIRECPC. We'll send you your dish, satelite modem, software and everything else you need. We can arrange professional installation for you, too. Either way, getting started is just a phone call or a mouse click away.

HARDWARE AS LOW AS $199

How does it work?

The engineers at Hughes figured out that the real bottleneck in the speed of the Internet wasn't the request **out** to the Web — telephone modems handle that just fine. Everything slows down when the Web tries to use the telephone system to send you **back** the media-rich information you requested. So, we use a much faster satellite connection for sending you the Web content you want. Check out the diagram — this is the system that makes DirecPC the fastest Internet access available nationwide.



now."

DirecPC gets pushy.

Sure, you love the idea of surfing the Web at up to 400 Kbps. But what if you could get your favorite Web sites and Usenet Newsgroups delivered straight into your PC by satellite — **automatically**, without even having to tie up your phone line to ask for them? That's just what DirecPC's Turbo WebCast™ and Turbo NewsCast™ services do — so you're never behind on the news and information that's important to you. The best thing about these two services? They're **free** with your paid subscription to any Turbo Internet™ service package.

SERVICE AS LOW AS

$19.99 MO.

The good news.

No other high-speed Internet access provider offers so much for so little. Take a close look at our service pricing — we're sure you'll find a package you like.

Service Plan Details	Residential		Business
Name of Service Plan	Executive Surfer	Family Surfer	Office Surfer
Price of Service Plan (Including ISP)	$29.99/Month	$49.99/Month	$129.99/Month
Price of Service Plan (Without ISP)	$19.99/Month	$34.99/Month	$109.99/Month
Hours of Service (Availability)	24 Hours a Day	24 Hours a Day	24 Hours a Day
On-Line Time (Hours of usage for Turbo Internet)	25 Hours /Month	100 Hours/Month	200 Hours/Month
Additional Hourly Rate (Including ISP) Additional Hourly Rate (Without ISP)	$1.99/Hour $.99/Hour	$1.99/Hour $.99/Hour	$1.99/Hour $.99/Hour
DirecPC Services			
Turbo Webcast: Broadcast delivery of popular Websites to your PC's hard drive	Included	Included	Included
Turbo Newscast: Broadcast delivery of up to 30,000 Usenet Newsgroups to your PC's hard drive	Included	Included	Included
Turbo Internet: Fully interactive access to the Internet at speeds up to 400Kbps	Included in Online Time	Included in Online Time	Included in Online Time
Free E-mail Accounts	1	1	4
Networking (Number of Seats)	N/A	N/A	4

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We know what you're thinking: "If I'm going to put a dish on my roof, I might as well sign up for one of those satellite TV services, too." We agree! That's why, for a few dollars more, you can upgrade to our DirecDuo dish with your DirecPC satellite modem. Add a Hughes-brand DSS® receiver (or the DSS receiver you already own), and you get almost 200 channels of crystal-clear satellite TV from DIRECTV® as well as Turbo Internet from DirecPC. Just call 1-800-DIRECPC or stop by www.direcpc.com to find out more.

You already know how great the Internet is — you're just looking for a way to go faster. DirecPC is the fastest Internet access available nationwide. It's affordable, and it's available everywhere. So, if you're still plugging away with an old-fashioned telephone modem, you need to ask yourself:

What are you waiting for?

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How It Works Active Directory

The Active Directory is the central store of information about authorized users and groups, printers, fax servers, and other objects. Earlier Windows versions scatter this information across the network, but the Active Directory brings it all together.

Object Records Each record contains information about an individual object—names of users, e-mail addresses, and the groups they belong to, for example. Any administrator can add new attributes to a class of object; the Active Directory stores the structure of the objects as well as the data.

John Doe
j_doe@mail.com

Move or Copy To move or copy a directory object, just drag it from one container to another. This makes it particularly easy to add users to security groups, or to move them from one secure domain to another.

Replication The Active Directory supports full replication, so you can maintain identical copies of a directory. That makes it easy for people in different geographic locations to log on quickly, and it also allows full backups of directory data.

Swifter Setup Until recently, you couldn't safely use third-party utilities like Ghost and DriveImage to clone Windows installations on multiple workstations. But with the help of a new Windows utility called SysPrep, network administrators can safely set up a single PC, modify the unique Security ID to prevent duplicates, and then copy that image to a hundred or a thousand PCs. When NT Server 5.0 appears, you'll also be able to create a script and install an OS upgrade from across the network, without requiring any user intervention. If your PCs support remote booting, the process is automatic.

How do you make sure your system files are up to date and that all your device drivers are fully compatible? For instant delivery of patches, service packs, and hotfixes, Microsoft introduced the Windows Update Web site with Windows 98, and so far Microsoft has used it to deliver at least one critical security update. NT 5.0 uses its own Windows Update Web page, but the jury's still out on its effectiveness. For home users, Windows Update won't be truly useful until high-speed, always-available Internet connections are ubiquitous. And for network administrators, the idea that users will decide which patches to apply is bone-chilling. Fortunately, NT 5.0 fixes at least one of NT 4.0's setup annoyances: You'll be able to add a service pack to the NT setup package, so you can install a fully updated copy of Windows on a new PC in one operation.

One of the biggest time and money wasters on corporate networks is the endless procession of personal appearances as IT staff installs and updates applications. With NT 5.0, network managers can "package" third-party applications for automatic distribution over the network, and guidelines help reduce the pain of DLL conflicts. Uninstalling applications is easier, too, with a new HTML-based Add/Remove Programs utility that lets you see details about each installed application, including how much disk space it consumes.

Enterprising Future Windows NT has earned its reputation as a first-rate network server to handle file sharing and print services. Because Internet Information Server is bundled with NT Server, it's also a superb choice as a Web server. But does NT have what it takes to replace clusters of Unix servers or mainframes in mission-critical environments? Microsoft is furiously shoveling enterprise-strength features into NT, but it will be years until those new features are ready for big networks.

What can you expect in the Enterprise version of NT Server next year?

- Better security. NT includes a laundry list of security enhancements, including a sweeping Security Configuration Manager that lets administrators define security policies for large groups of desktops via policy management. But as long as Microsoft refuses to share NT's source code with independent security experts, they'll have trouble earning their trust.
- Support for thin clients. NT 5.0 includes a Terminal Server component, which lets nearly any client machine run Windows applications directly from the server. Terminal Server is a great concept, but the code we saw isn't ready for use on production networks.
- Scalability. Microsoft's blueprint for NT includes new features designed to make it an absolute mainframe killer, including support for 64-bit memory and file addressing capabilities on clusters of multiprocessor machines. But even the most aggressive timetables suggest it will be at least 18 months before those features are solid enough even for the first pilot projects.

Reality Check Windows 2000

Is NT 5.0 truly a breakthrough? It's too early to tell based on the interim versions we've tested, but we can make some predictions and offer some advice on how you can prepare for your next Windows upgrade. You have questions? We have answers.

Should I try the NT 5.0 beta version?

Beta software is inherently buggy. Some features don't work properly, and you won't find drivers and patches for many third-party products until the OS is released. We recommend installing a beta OS only if you need to test compatibility with your existing systems and network, and then only on a dedicated test machine. Never, ever install beta software on a machine that holds critical data.

How easy will it be to upgrade from Windows 95 or 98 to NT 5.0?

As part of the upgrade process, NT 5.0 will scan your system looking for incompatible drivers and software. In some cases, you'll be able to download a patch file, but if you're using an application that relies on a VxD, it simply won't work under NT 5.0. We predict that most users will need to do some tweaking after upgrading.

What kind of hardware should I buy today to avoid upgrade hassles tomorrow?

If support is crucial, look for products and vendors that are well represented on Microsoft's Hardware Compatibility List. Up-to-date drivers are the key to a successful Windows upgrade; don't risk compatibility headaches with bargain components from manufacturers that aren't committed to NT.

When will NT 5.0 be available commercially? How much will it cost?

Expect to see the first commercial release of NT 5.0 in the second half of 1999. Although it won't be as inexpensive as Windows 98, we expect Microsoft to price the upgrade aggressively—almost certainly under $200. We also expect system manufacturers like Dell, Micron, and Compaq to offer eye-popping deals on NT 5.0 PCs.

Will all this stuff really work?

Not right away. The newer the feature, the more likely it will require a service pack or two before the most serious kinks are worked out. Not surprisingly, you'll have the best results in all-Microsoft environments, using the latest hardware designs.

Can NT really replace Unix and mainframes?

Over time, super-high-end systems using the NT kernel will displace an increasing number of large systems. But Microsoft has a lot of work to do before nervous network administrators are ready to trade their rock-solid older systems for clusters of NT boxes.

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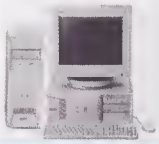

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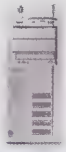

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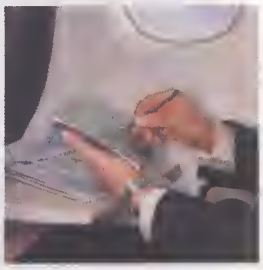

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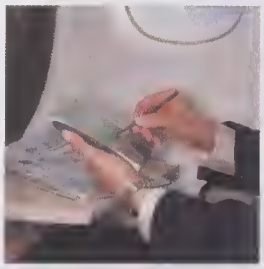

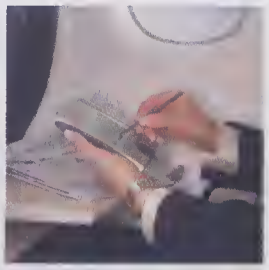

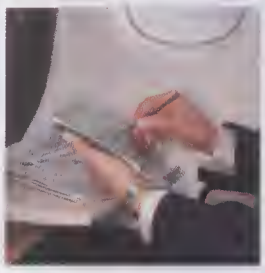

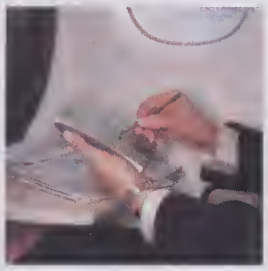

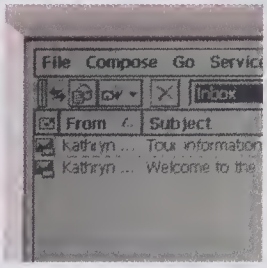

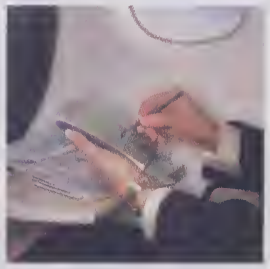

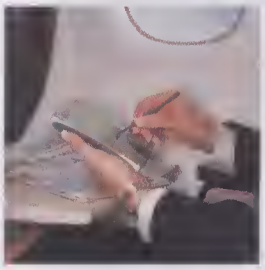

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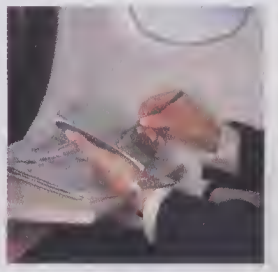

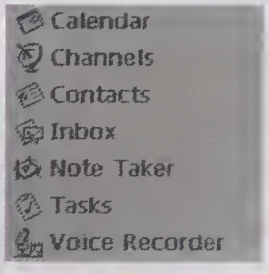

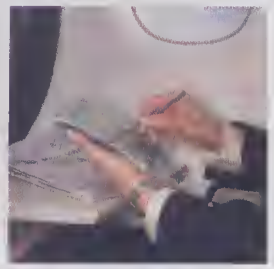

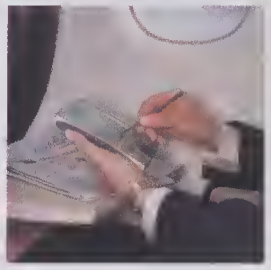

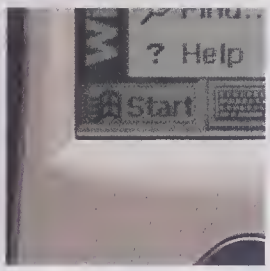

So you never drop your cell phone. You never spill your coffee or misplace your keys. Come on. Nobody's that graceful. And an inviolable law about human possessions says that if it can be carried by hand, sooner or later disaster is bound to strike.

The burning question for those who use handheld PCs is how much and what kind of disaster are we talking about? That's what we set out to discover in our first annual torture test for handheld and palmtop systems. *PC Computing*'s Labs rounded up a lucky 13—all weighing less than 2 pounds. These PCs took every shape and size. Some were simple schedulers and note-takers. Others had advanced communications abilities, including fax, voice recording, infrared, and e-mail. And several came with backlit color screens and a full suite of applications.

We made no stipulations about a machine's processor, operating system, or bundled apps. It just had to be a handheld system that connects to a desktop PC.

Then we got down to business. We tested our handhelds for performance and battery life. We put them through our usability mill. And then we tried to turn them into ugly paperweights by way of our evil torture tests. It was a long but fun enterprise. You'll be surprised by the results.

***SPLASH! CRUNCH! BANG!* THIRTEEN POCKET-SIZE PCs TAKE THE ULTIMATE PUNISHMENT.**

PC COMPUTING'S House of

PHOTOGRAPHY AND DIGITAL IMAGING BY TOM LANDECKER

PAIN

BY MARTY JEROME

TURN UP THE HEAT

When's the last time you rode through Houston in the trunk of a car? In the summertime? Businesspeople routinely submit their defenseless handheld PCs to that kind of hot environment, never anticipating a meltdown. But even the magnified sunlight streaming through an office window can torture a delicate machine.

To find out what happens when things get really hot, we baked 13 diminutive devices at 120 degrees Fahrenheit with 30 percent humidity. Broiling time: 2 hours. The systems were powered up the entire time—it was enough to make Windows sweat. After we pulled the units from the oven we gave them an hour to cool. Then we inspected for damage.

No Sweat All the handhelds emerged cool under the collar. How dare they? So it was time for the torch. We cranked up the heat to 180 degrees. We baked the devices for 2 hours (in this round, they were powered down). It was enough to char a rib roast. We gave the contenders an hour to cool, then reinspected them.

To our sadistic disappointment, all the handheld PCs survived. Given the cramped confines of their little chassis—and the delicate wiring and circuitry within—we expected at least *some* melting action. But, if anything, these little computers seem to like the heat.

FREEZE FRAME

Unless your office is an igloo, walking your handheld PC from a freezing parking lot to the toasty comfort of your desk demonstrates a law of chemistry: A sudden and dramatic change in temperature results in condensation. You know, *water*. Pop quiz: What happens to wet electronic devices when a surge of electricity passes through them?

We chilled our test victims to 32 degrees Fahrenheit, no humidity, power running. We left them in the cold for 2 solid hours. They got an hour to warm up—during which we hoped enough condensation would form to wreak havoc, if not with the electronics, then with the frozen liquid crystals in the displays. Our mean hopes were dashed: All the machines survived.

Brrrr Undeterred, we popped the systems back in the deep freeze, this time at a chilly 0 degrees, no humidity, power off. Two hours later, out they came like Eskimo pies. We gave them their customary one-hour warmup, then we put them to work. All survived our big chill, but not all unscathed.

The Geofox-One Professional lost its ability to function on battery power, although it worked fine when connected to an AC adapter. The lesson here? If your handheld device has been sitting in the cold, give it time to warm up *and* dry out.

HARD FALL

It's exhilarating to watch an expensive and delicate system crash to the floor. In this case, however, an overwhelming majority of the handhelds survived our free fall—and the landing.

The flat-drop test was done from a height of 29 inches onto the carpet-covered metallic surface of our special testing equipment. The handheld PCs tumbled off our drop table just as yours is sure to someday fall from your desk or pocket. The systems were running and their covers were open. We accumulated the somewhat scattered pieces, then reassembled our Humpty Dumpties as best we could.

Kablooey In the end, all but one handheld PC survived this drop test. The Everex Freestyle Executive bought the farm. Our technicians removed and reinstalled its memory chips and battery at the suggestion of Everex. But no dice. Geofox's Geofox-One lost its connection to the LCD panel, which had to be replaced; otherwise, the unit survived.

For our edge-drop test, the PCs cases were closed and the power was off. We dropped the machines from a height of 29 inches at an angle, so they tumbled head over heels onto the same surface. None died—or even suffered much more than cosmetic damage.

ALL WET

Those who've been struck by lightning—and survived—are never quite the same after. So it is with handheld PCs that survive being doused by coffee. With cream and sugar, thanks.

Only the NEC MobilePro 750C failed our spill test outright. Several of the machines suffered sticky or confused keyboards. Blame the condiments. We concocted a 1 tablespoon bath of coffee, cream, and sugar, and poured it between the G and H keys—or over the middle of the units with no keyboard—while the machine was turned on. So as not to be too cruel, lab technicians turned off the unit, flipped it over, and wiped off any extra java. Still, it was quite a mess. The units dried out for three days before we powered them up.

Glug, Glug After its soaking, the Hewlett-Packard 660LX Palmtop PC never regained its 6, Y, H, and N keys, but otherwise worked fine. Various keys on the IBM WorkPad PC Companion and the LG Phenom H/PC Ultra lost their snap, but still functioned.

However, most of the NEC MobilePro's keys stopped working. NEC sent us some cleaning spray, which didn't help. If you accidentally spill something on your machine, here's a tip: Let the unit dry completely, then use a rag that's barely damp before powering it up.

LIFE OF HARD KNOCKS

Toughness is only one measure of a mighty electronic midget. Most surprising about this roundup is the diversity in both design and capability of these little tykes.

They fall into two categories: palmtops and handhelds. Palmtops are slightly larger than a man's wallet. Handheld devices have a clamshell design, large color screens, and QWERTY keyboards. You don't get color screens, keyboards, or extensive communications with a palmtop device—yet (see "Hold the Future," page 212). But they work a lot longer without replacing batteries. When we timed data entry, however, the handhelds with keyboards smoked the palmtops.

How Handy Our favorite palmtop is the 3Com Palm III, which has evolved into a lightweight and hard-working assistant. We prefer the PalmOS—also used in the WorkPad, a Palm III clone from IBM—over the palmtop version of Windows CE, which can be clunky. And despite sluggish data entry, the Palm III and the WorkPad sailed through our torture tests, earned high praise for usability, and topped the charts in battery life. The WorkPad lasted longer than the Palm III because of dimmer backlighting.

If ruggedness is a top priority, also consider the Casio Cassiopeia E-10. We pounded it like bullies ganging up on the class nerd. It calmly took its beating.

Windows CE dominates the handheld market, but the EPOC operating system is a capable taskmaster. The Psion Series 5's usability ranks as high as that of any comparable CE device.

As state-of-the-art handheld PCs go, the Compaq C-Series 2010C has the edge. Despite its high price and short battery life, it's got a 75MHz RISC processor, a bright color screen, gobs of memory, and admirable usability. But the keyboard is a hunt-and-peck affair.

Franklin Electronic Publishers' Rex Pro, a credit-card–size PDA not available in time for this review, is a natural for storing your contacts and schedule. But it can't beat the flexibility and power of other handhelds.

In Hand Spend an hour with 3Com's Palm III Connected Organizer and you'll understand why it's cornered half the market. Don't overlook its clone, the IBM WorkPad.

Motley Crew The pricey Nokia 9000i Communicator has the most innovative design of the units we tested: It doubles as a digital phone. The Sharp Mobilon HC-4600, another machine with sleek good looks, has a digital camera option ($399). But if its gouging price ($899) doesn't break you, buying batteries will.

Kudos to the Hewlett-Packard 660LX's bright screen and booming speakers, which are of better quality than most notebook speakers. The NEC MobilePro 750C and the LG Phenom have keyboards big enough for touch typing—which helped them stomp the competition in our performance tests.

MOST DURABLE

Beater Box Take a swing at the Casio Cassiopeia E-10. This palmtop passed our torture tests laughing.

BEST BUNDLE

Do-It-All Device Despite its $799 price, you'll get more done—faster—with the Compaq C-Series 2010C.

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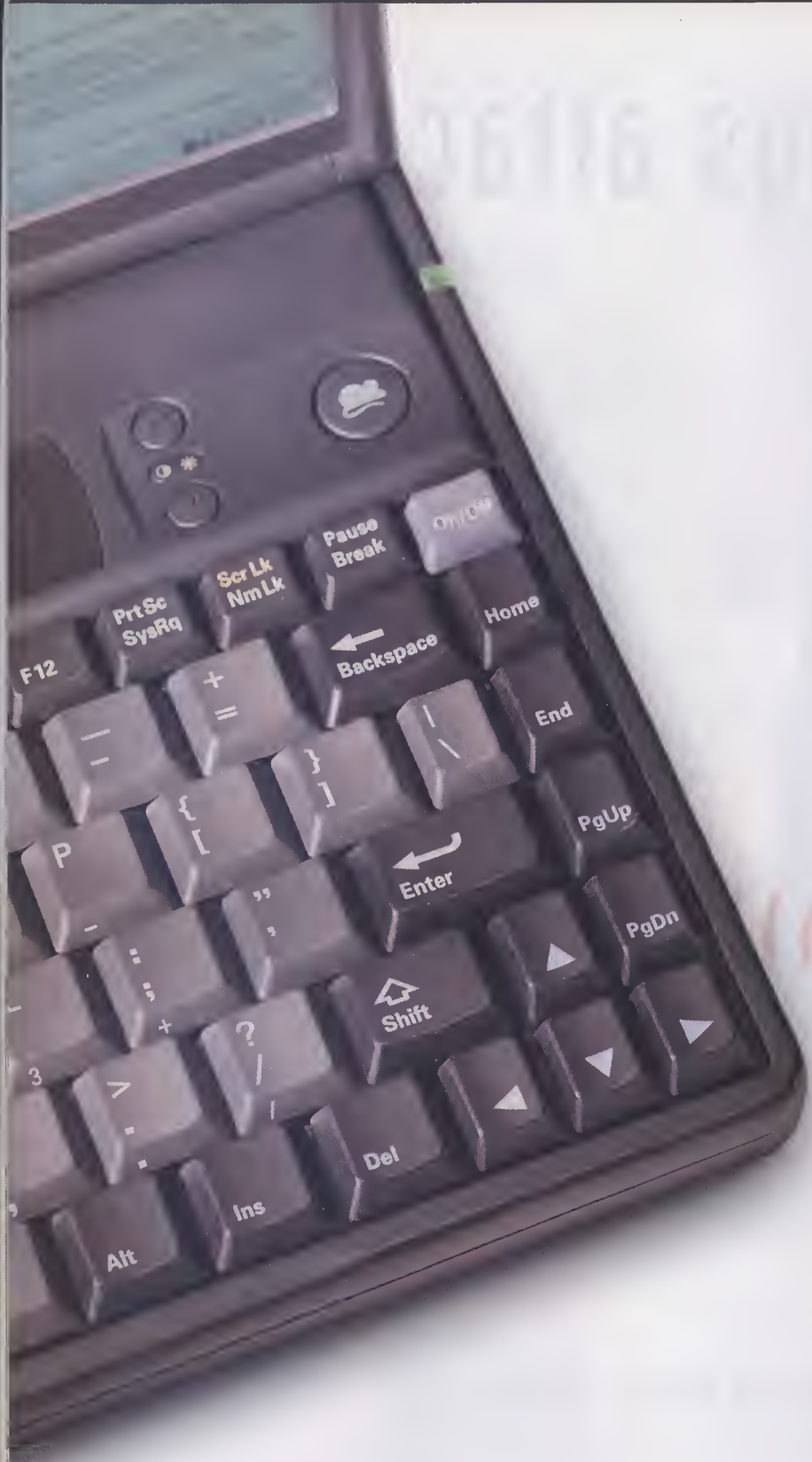

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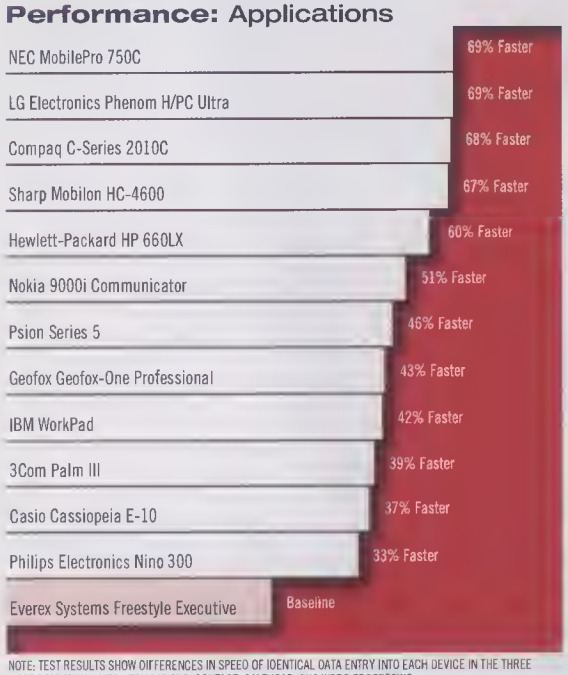
POCKET PC THRILLS,

OK, they're tough. But can they manage the details? Regardless of durability and the laundry list of features a handheld PC includes, performance, battery life, and usability determine how much use you actually get from it. The key is to figure out where you're willing to compromise.

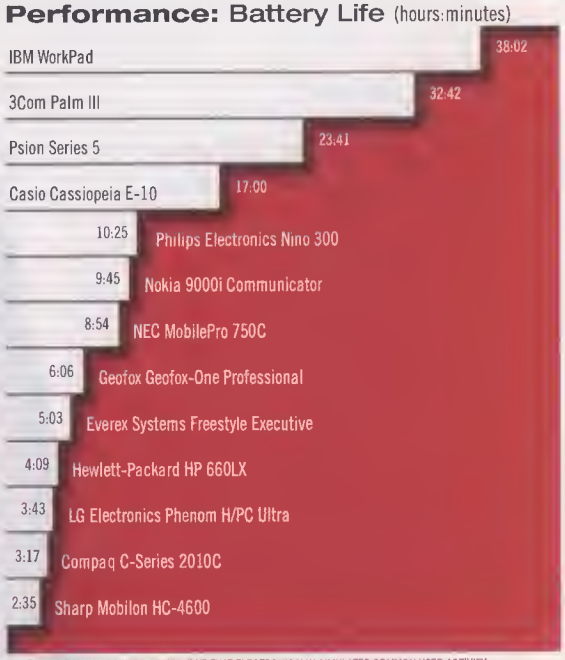
Performance: Applications



NOTE: TEST RESULTS SHOW DIFFERENCES IN SPEED OF IDENTICAL DATA ENTRY INTO EACH DEVICE IN THE THREE MOST COMMONLY USED APPLICATIONS: CONTACT, CALENDAR, AND WORD PROCESSING.

Fast Draw **The expansive keyboards on the NEC MobilePro 750C and the LG Phenom H/PC Ultra helped them best the others in data-entry speed. Keyboardless palmtop devices suffered a distinct handicap.**

Performance: Battery Life (hours:minutes)



NOTE: ZDIGIT IS A HARDWARE COMPONENT THAT ELECTRONICALLY SIMULATES COMMON USER ACTIVITY.

Charge Ahead **To test battery life, we simulated continuous keystrokes and manually timed how long it took the devices to fizzle out. The IBM WorkPad and the 3Com Palm III dusted the competition.**

USABILITY CLOSE-UP Pocket PCs

Gone are the days geeks held their PDAs inches from their faces, squinting. So what else can you expect in the way of usability?

Living Color **The Compaq 2010C's screen measures only 6.1 inches diagonally, but it's easy on the eyes.**

One-Button Syncing **Slide the Palm III into its cradle and open the Palm Desktop on your PC. Then press the Sync button on the cradle. What could be easier?**

Touch-Type **The Psion Series 5's keyboard is tiny, but it's well designed and has as much feedback as that of a notebook.**

CHILLS, AND SPILLS

	Bake	Freeze	Drop	Spill	Survivor	
3Com Palm III Connected Organizer					✓	Sailed through the slosh and tumble without a word of complaint.
Casio Cassiopeia E-10 Palm-size PC					✓	Tougher than Mike Tyson's business manager. It took all we had and kept going.
Compaq Computer C-Series 2010C					✓	Kept mechanically intact throughout, though a splash of coffee gooped up some keys. A little cleaning put everything back in order.
Geofox Geofox-One Professional					✓	It survived, but not without some harrowing near misses. The machine stopped working on batteries after the freeze test. It lost its LCD on the flat-drop test, but revived once we replaced the screen. And it suffered some more cosmetic damage on the edge-drop test. The moral: Treat this device with the utmost care.
Hewlett-Packard HP 660LX Palmtop PC					✓	After a dousing of coffee, the machine lost use of its 6, Y, H, and N keys, though everything else was in working order.
IBM WorkPad PC Companion					✓	Coffee made the keys sticky and hard to press. But a little elbow grease—and a damp cloth—solved this problem.
LG Electronics Phenom H/PC Ultra					✓	Coffee knocked this machine out cold—at first. But the Phenom revived when we pressed the reset button. Some keys were sticky after the coffee dried, but a quick cleaning returned everything to normal.
Nokia 9000i Communicator					✓	It seemed to want more pounding. There was no damage whatsoever.
Philips Electronics Nino 300					✓	It'll take your worst drubbing and keep on trucking.
Psion Series 5					✓	Give it your best blows, and it'll shrug them off.
Sharp Electronics Mobilon HC-4600					✓	It seems to like torture. This little guy suffered no damage at all.
NEC Computer Systems MobilePro 750C				✗		Coffee dealt a sharp blow to its head. The majority of keys stopped functioning properly. Cleaning with spray provided by NEC didn't help things.
Everex Systems Freestyle Executive			✗			The only machine to fail outright—it bit the dust after the first drop test. We could not revive it despite our best efforts, which included removing and reinstalling the batteries and memory.

GUIDE TO THE RATINGS: ✗ CASUALTY. HANDHELD FAILED; WON'T BOOT. ✓ SURVIVOR. HANDHELD PASSED ALL TESTS; STILL BOOTS.

TOP PC COMPANIONS

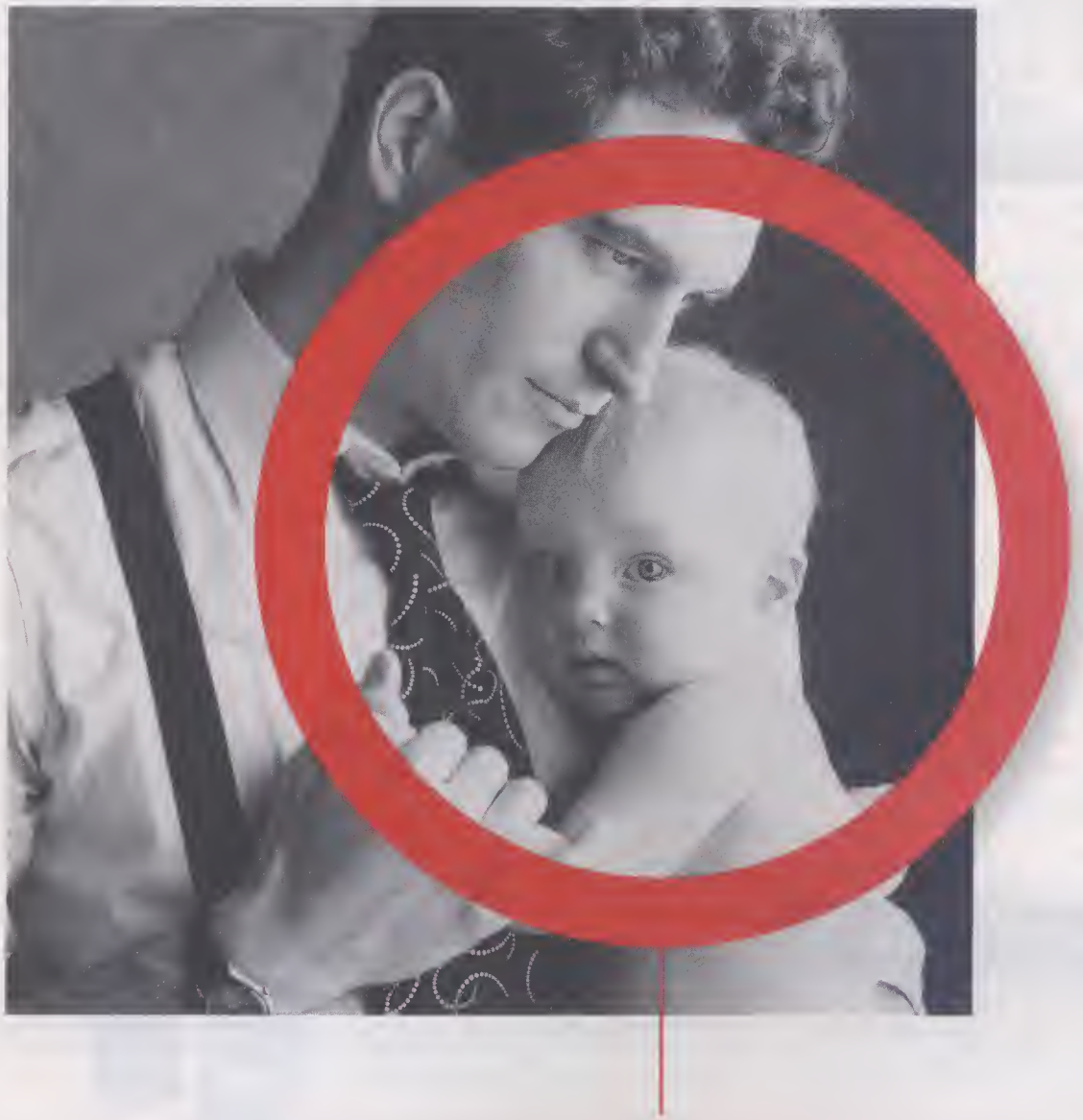
Our tests proved most of the handhelds are tough enough to serve. But that's only part of the story. Here's how they stack up across the board.

PRODUCT*	Price**	Torture Test Survivor	Weight (oz.)	RAM/ROM (As Tested)	Display Size/ Type	Pros	Cons	Verdict
PC Computing BEST 3Com Palm III Connected Organizer (800) 881-7256 *InfoLink No. 612*	$369	✓	6	2MB/ 2MB	4 inches/ 16-level grayscale	Elegant design; first-rate usability; battery refuses to die; price fits any budget.	Screen can be difficult to read; awkward data entry from touch screen.	★★★★★ The ultimate portable PC companion.
Casio Cassiopeia E-10 Palm-size PC (800) 836-8580 *InfoLink No. 601*	$399	✓	6.5	4MB/ 8MB	3.9 inches/ 4-level grayscale	Excellent dollar value; solid usability; tough as nails.	Windows CE's palmtop version still stumbles.	★★★★ The best Windows CE palmtop going.
Compaq Computer C-Series 2010C *InfoLink No. 602*	$799	✓	15.2	28MB/ 16MB	6.1 inches/ 256 colors	Loaded to the nines; bright color screen; impressive usability; plenty of memory.	Price tag buys you yesterday's notebook; short battery life; tiny keys.	★★★★ Fits in a fanny pack and runs near-full-power Windows apps.
Hewlett-Packard HP 660LX Palmtop PC (800) 443-1254	$999	✓	20.6	32MB/ 10MB	7 inches/ 256 colors	Gorgeous screen; fine speakers; well-stocked, including a 56Kbps modem; tons of memory.	Costs as much as a desktop PC; heavy; small keys; doesn't like coffee.	★★★★ Your eyes will thank you for this WinCE device's vivid display—if you can afford it.
IBM WorkPad PC Companion (800) 426-2968 *InfoLink No. 603*	$399	✓	6	2MB/ 2MB	4 inches/ monochrome	Simple, elegant design; longest battery life; excellent price.	Dim black-and-white screen; clumsy data entry.	★★★★ IBM's clone of the Palm III shows the best of what a palmtop PC can do.
Philips Electronics Nino 300 (888) 367-8356 *InfoLink No. 604*	$459	✓	7.33	8MB/ 8MB	4 inches/ 4-level grayscale	Speech recognition feature lets you do simple tasks with your voice.	A bit pricey for a palmtop; dim screen.	★★★★ This WinCE palmtop is a tireless note-taker and scheduler.
Psion Series 5 (800) 997-7466 *InfoLink No: 605*	$499	✓	12.5	8MB/ 6MB	5.9 inches/ 16-level grayscale	Refined usability; excellent keyboard despite its small size.	Grayscale screen is hard on the eyes; AC adapter and modem cost extra.	★★★★ This alternative to a Windows CE device is worth a second look.
Everex Systems Freestyle Executive (877) 472-5672 *InfoLink No. 606*	$479		5.3	8MB/ 8MB	4 inches/ 4-level grayscale	Includes a 33.6Kbps modem.	Lost it in drop test; hard-to-read screen and hard-to-use onscreen keyboard; slow.	★★★ A fine-featured—but delicate—contender among Windows CE palmtops.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK. **ESTIMATED STREET PRICE.

★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

(continued on page 212)



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***TechRefresh lease prices are based on a 36-month lease and are available to business customers. Businesses can qualify for 60-day same-as-cash and individuals for 6-month same-as-cash programs. If purchase advance and related charges are not paid in full within 60 days from purchase date for business or within 180 days from purchase date for individuals, finance charges will be assessed from purchase date. APR varies and is 17.65% as of 8/25/98 with a minimum finance charge of $1.00. Term financing is available to individuals for home or business use. PowerXchange accepts trade in of most major computer brands. Please call for details and the latest qualified brand list. Cash rebates are based on the average wholesale value of your PC per the Orion Blue Book, or other source chosen by Micron, adjusted for condition at trade-in.**

TOP PC COMPANIONS (continued from page 210)

PRODUCT*	Price**	Torture Test Survivor	Weight (oz.)	RAM/ROM (As Tested)	Display Size/ Type	Pros	Cons	Verdict
LG Electronics Phenom H/PC Ultra (800) 243-0000 *InfoLink No. 607*	$799	✓	29	16MB/ 12MB	8.1 inches/ 256 colors	Spacious keyboard; large screen; great performance.	Weak battery life; costly; heavy.	☆☆☆ A good choice when a mini notebook is still too big.
NEC Computer Systems MobilePro 750C (888) 863-2669 *InfoLink No. 608*	$799		30	16MB/ 16MB	8.1 inches/ 256 colors	Beautiful screen; touch-typable keyboard; top-notch performance.	Expensive; heavy; fragile; failed our spill test.	☆☆☆ A note-taker and e-mail machine that's almost a notebook.
Nokia 9000i Communicator (888) 665-4228 *InfoLink No. 609*	$899	✓	13.9	2MB/ 8MB	4.9 inches/ 8-level grayscale	Artful design; doubles as digital phone; solid fit and finish.	Proprietary OS means few apps; difficult setup; high price.	☆☆☆ A star for communications.
Sharp Electronics Mobilon HC-4600 (800) 237-4277 *InfoLink No. 610*	$899	✓	17.5	16MB/ 16MB	6.5 inches/ 256 colors	Solid usability; digital camera option; built-in modem.	Pricey; worst battery life.	☆☆☆ A pleasure to use, but stay close to an AC outlet.
Geofox Geofox-One Professional www.geofox.com *InfoLink No. 611*	$911	✓	13.7	16MB/ 8MB	6.8 inches/ 16-level grayscale	Loaded with features.	A touch pad and a grayscale screen—for how much?	☆☆ Better deals abound.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK. **ESTIMATED STREET PRICE.

☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

Hold the Future

If you've seen Franklin Electronic Publishers' Rex Pro PC Companion—a credit-card–size PDA that accepts input from an onscreen keyboard—you've seen the future of handhelds. But of course, one size doesn't fit all.

You'll see more of the smaller-is-better devices, from the Rex to the next-generation 3Com Palm III Connected Organizer, which will be thinner than a half-inch. Just around the corner—but not in time for this review—is a svelte new breed of larger Windows CE machines that run the latest version of the pocket-size OS, code-named Jupiter. Vadem's Clio and Hewlett-Packard's Jornada 820 are two examples. They are slightly smaller—and cheaper—than Windows 98 notebooks, but offer an instant-on feature and longer battery life.

New Twist One of the first Jupiter devices, the Vadem Clio is a great travel companion.

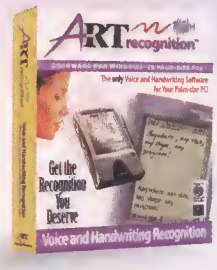
All in One You carry a pager, a cell phone, and a PDA—why not combine them? Qualcomm's new pdQ smartphone, an all-in-one digital phone and pen-based organizer, will be available early next year. The smartphone offers paging, e-mail, and Web browsing too.

Symbian—a group venture of Psion, Ericsson, and Nokia—is developing products built around the EPOC operating system that will let you browse the Web and read e-mail and files. All from a device that fits in your shirt pocket. Another consortium backs Bluetooth, the code name for a new standard that will let notebooks, phones, handheld PCs, and other devices communicate wirelessly via radio frequency. Write a letter on your handheld PC, then send it to your cell phone to be faxed or e-mailed—at up to 721Kbps, over 13 times faster than a 56K connection. Look for Bluetooth devices in late 1999 or early 2000.

Your Call Qualcomm's pdQ smartphone puts your life in the palm of your hand.

Gordon Bass

Get the Recognition You Deserve!



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PC MAGAZINE **WINNER Golden Gavel Award June 25, 1998**

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It's the full version of the handwriting recognition software that earned Mobile Computing's *1st Class Award*, and is the 1998 mobilis *Readers' Choice Award* winner for Windows CE software. The outstanding out-of-box recognition gets even better as you use it, and includes ART's proprietary "Ink-Smoothing" to remove the jagged edges caused when writing in a bumpy environment such as in a car or plane.

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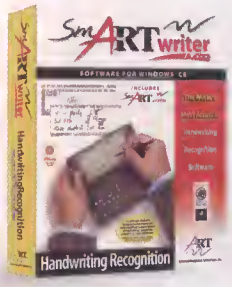
Use Your Voice to Operate Your Palm-size PC

Create your own macros — the most powerful way to operate your Palm-size PC

Fast, accurate voice recognition saves time and increases your productivity. No more scrolling down lists for files, contact names, and phone numbers — just tell your Palm-size PC what you want to do! You can choose from a great collection of commands already built in, or easily create your own library of commands trained to recognize your voice! Some of the incredibly time-saving commands built in include:

- **Open** + a document or note filename to open that document
- **Go to** + an application name to launch that application.
- **Dial** + contact name from your address book to dial a phone number via DTMF tones. Supports multiple numbers.
- **E-mail** + contact name opens and addresses a new e-mail form.
- **Fax** creates and addresses a new fax form. (Requires bFax Express).
- **Show Details** + contact name to display the complete contact record in the address book.
- **Get Mail** launches the Inbox, dials your e-mail server, and checks on-line for new messages.
- **Macro** executes a user-defined macro – commands like "cut" and "paste" – or inserts phrases or boiler plate text into a document. For example: create macros for "send office" or "send home" that would insert text into an e-mail message requesting that information be sent to your home or office address.
- **Voice Mail** creates a voice message that will be attached to an e-mail.
- **Calendar** launches the Calendar application with your choice of view (day, week, month, year, today or agenda).

ARTrecognition™ FOR WINDOWS CE PALM-SIZE PCs



Enter Data in Your Own Handwriting!

smARTwriter® Plus is the easiest, most accurate way to enter data on your H/PC. You get the best recognition accuracy because the built-in QuickTrainer™ "learns" your handwriting. Enter text and digits in any application, write in any size, anywhere on the screen. Create your own shortcuts or gestures to save time and increase your productivity. **smARTwriter Plus** requires minimal memory space and does not affect the processing speed of your H/PC. Also included: **smARTscribble™**, the handy utility that allows you to scribble your thoughts and notes, or even make a quick sketch!

smARTwriter® FOR WINDOWS CE HANDHELD PCs

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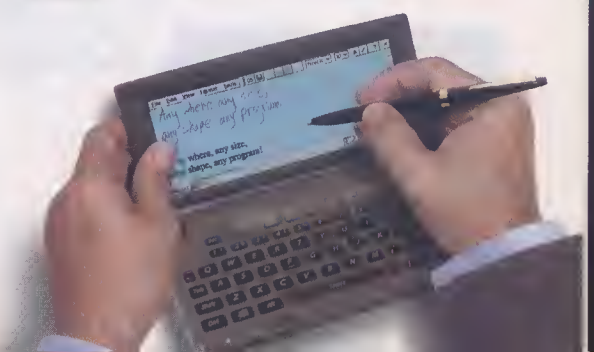


Take It in Hand

Many notebook PCs never leave the home or office. When they travel, they're in pampering cases. But like your keys or your wallet, a handheld PC goes everywhere with you. And it's just as vulnerable to loss or theft. But unlike your keys and wallet, a handheld PC can crack, short-circuit, and die.

As our torture tests proved, however, today's offerings are a lot tougher than you might think. They take the occasional tumble. They acclimate to Fairbanks, Alaska, or Cairo, Egypt, with aplomb. But they don't like liquids.

Before buying a handheld PC, consider how you'll use it. Whether you choose a PalmOS device, Windows CE palmtop or handheld, or another operating system depends on your needs. 3Com's Palm III is the champ for keeping track of life's details and basic e-mail communications. With the right software you can even browse the Web on a Palm III or IBM WorkPad. (For the best apps, see "Office in Your Pocket," page 223.) Windows CE palmtops offer many of the same features, but we found the palmtop version of Windows CE a bit rough around the edges.

Microsoft's mini OS shines in the handheld arena, however. You get pocket versions of most of the apps you're used to and full keyboards, plenty of memory, color screens, even built-in modems. But you pay for the extra computing power. And as we saw with the Compaq C-Series, battery life is limited.

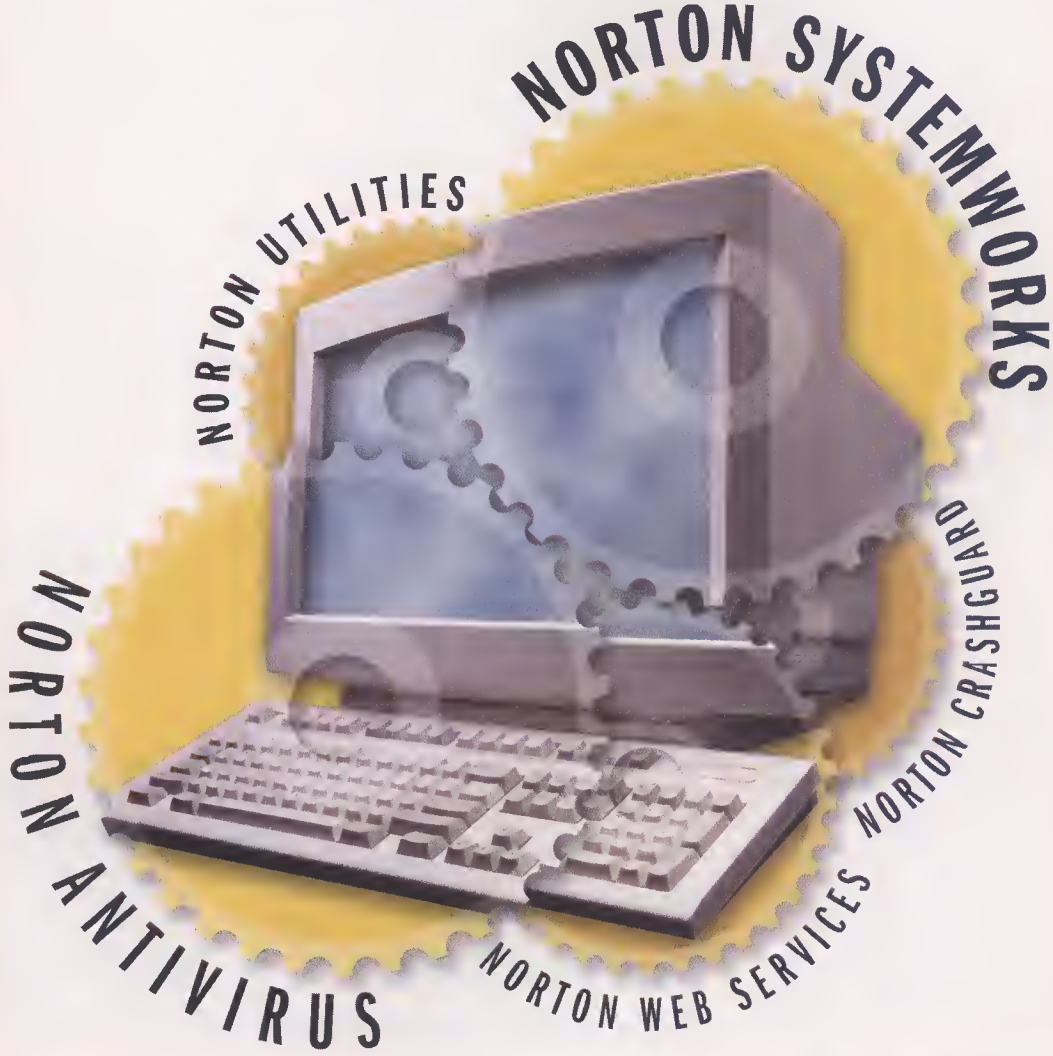
Palmtop PCs don't pretend to be full-featured productivity machines. They're schedulers and note-takers, plain and simple. Their grayscale screens can be hard to read. But the best ones manage far more data than a paper-based planner ever could. With the press of a button, they synchronize with your desktop PC. And they fit into just about any budget—not to mention your pocket. The WorkPad and Palm III were tops in battery life. And they can take hard knocks.

Performance and durability testing was performed by JULI DAVIS, IBRAHIM GUL, *and* CHARLES PURDY. *Lab Manager,* LULIT BEZUAYEHU.

DECISION MAKER — WHICH HANDHELD PC IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

1 Choose the factor that's most important.	2 Choose the next most important factor.	3 What else is important?	4 For your needs, the best handheld PC to buy is . . .
Durability	Price	Usability	3Com Palm III
		Battery Life	Casio Cassiopeia E-10
	Features	Usability	Compaq C-Series 2010C
		Battery Life	Psion Series 5
Price	Durability	Usability	3Com Palm III
		Battery Life	IBM WorkPad
	Features	Usability	Psion Series 5
		Battery Life	3Com Palm III
Features	Durability	Usability	Compaq C-Series 2010C
		Battery Life	Casio Cassiopeia E-10
	Price	Usability	3Com Palm III
		Battery Life	IBM WorkPad

GEAR UP FOR TOP PERFORMANCE



SYMANTEC.™

Norton SystemWorks™: The smartest way to keep your computer working

Whether you're an experienced PC user or new to the world of computing, you need utilities. Your computer needs constant maintenance — from optimizing your system to keeping your hard drive clean. It needs protection against viruses and infections. And ways to prevent crashes and resolve conflicts.

That's a lot of utilities. So many that they duplicate functions, sucking up system memory and precious space on your hard drive. Sometimes they even conflict with each other!

Of course, computers ought to function well these days. But since they sometimes don't, you need a single, comprehensive solution that will keep your computer working. A solution that's affordable. A solution that's easy to use.

That solution is Norton SystemWorks. Because it has the very best and most current version of everything you need, Norton SystemWorks is the smartest way to keep your computer working. And Norton SystemWorks is Windows 95 and Windows 98 compatible.

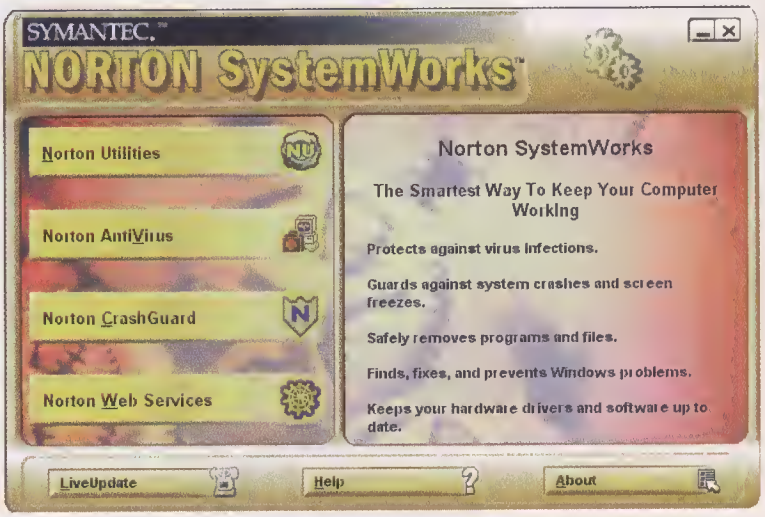
What makes Norton SystemWorks the best?

Norton Utilities™ – the #1 problem-solving software for over 15 years and the industry leader in detecting, repairing and preventing major and minor computer problems. Offering unrivaled power and control, it optimizes your computer to run at peak efficiency, detecting Windows problems in the background and solving them with intelligent repair capability.

Norton AntiVirus™ – the #1 anti-virus program in the U.S. and in the world, recommended by users more frequently than any other product of its kind. It updates itself automatically and works in the background to eliminate today's and tomorrow's viruses, no matter where they come from.

Norton CrashGuard™ – automatic protection against PC crashes and screen freezes that's three times as effective as any other program. Using award-winning Norton technology to find and solve your disk problems, Norton SystemWorks includes software that detects and solves software problems behind the scenes without slowing you down.

Norton Web Services™ – a web service that locates and helps you install any



Four award-winning Norton products integrated to work as one.

To purchase Norton SystemWorks online or to locate a list of resellers visit us

hardware drivers and software updates specific to your system. It detects the software and hardware installed on your computer, then uses the power of the Internet to check your needs against Symantec's up-to-the-minute database containing thousands of patches, drivers and application add-ons.

Easy to install with the CD Start screen.

Norton SystemWorks is integrated

Only Norton SystemWorks offers you an award-winning, best-of-breed collection of utilities — and you can click it all into action from a single, integrated Norton SystemWorks screen.

Because Norton SystemWorks is so tightly integrated, it's easy to install and easy to launch. All the utilities included in Norton SystemWorks are designed to work compatibly with each other and duplicate functionality has been eliminated. Moving from one utility to another — say, from Norton AntiVirus™ to Norton Utilities™ — is as simple as clicking a button on your screen. What's more, Norton SystemWorks features like CD Start and Launch Pad make it exceptionally easy to use.

Just one purchase buys you all the functionality you need for system problem-solving and optimization, virus protection, maintenance and crash protection.

Norton SystemWorks runs the way you want it to

Whether you want it to work automatically in the background or you want to customize it to adapt to your level of expertise, Norton SystemWorks can accommodate your needs. Norton SystemWorks can be customized for the perfect fit between you and your computer.

And if you're already using other Norton products, it's easy and affordable to move up to Norton SystemWorks.

Norton SystemWorks is an excellent value

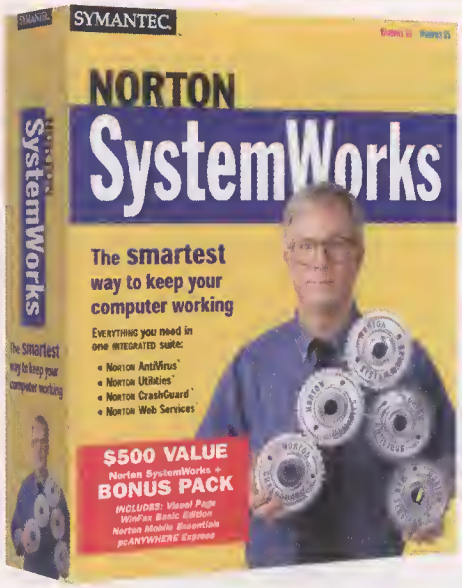
Norton SystemWorks also comes with a FREE Bonus Pack CD including the following stand alone products: Norton Mobile Essentials™ — to resolve laptop connection problems, Visual Page™ — a web development tool for building, deploying, and managing personal web pages, WinFax™ Basic Edition — to send and receive faxes directly from your computer, and pcANYWHERE™ Express — to remotely access PCs, applications and information from your web browser.

Just one purchase buys you four award-winning products and a free Bonus Pack. A total retail package valued at more than $500 for one great price — $99.95*. Nothing beats Norton SystemWorks. It's a convenient, one-box solution with all of the most current and effective PC utilities.

Norton SystemWorks. The smartest way to keep your computer working.

*Manufacturer's suggested retail price

on the web at: www.shop.symantec.com/nsw10buy.html SYMANTEC.™



NORTON Utilities

NORTON AntiVirus

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One Suite Way to Gear Up for Top Performance.

Introducing Norton SystemWorks.™ Complete versions of the latest award-winning utilities for Windows® 95 and Windows® 98 from Symantec™ Corporation – now available for the first time ever in a single integrated suite. Geared to work together, they eliminate the confusion of choosing from all the different utilities on the shelf. Just shift up to Norton SystemWorks and you have everything you need.

The smartest way to keep your computer working. Norton SystemWorks protects, maintains, fixes and fine-tunes your system. Easily customized, you can choose whether you want Norton SystemWorks to run automatically in the background, or personalize it to suit the way you prefer to manage and maintain your system.

An incredible value. Along with complete versions of four award-winning utilities, Norton SystemWorks features a FREE Bonus Pack that includes Norton Mobile Essentials™, Visual Page™, WinFax™ Basic Edition and pcANYWHERE™ Express. Over $500 worth of software for just $99.95!* More than 30 million customers have relied on Norton to protect their computers. And at this price, shouldn't you?

Gear up for top performance. Go to your local reseller to get four award-winning utilities plus a FREE bonus pack for one amazing price – just $99.95!

*Manufacturer's suggested retail price.

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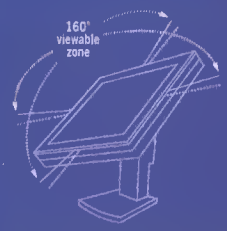

THE MULTISYNC LCD SERIES WITH XTRAVIEW™ TECHNOLOGY.

The remarkable new MultiSync monitors feature XtraView technology for a wide 160° viewing angle 80° up, down, left and right.

	Viewable Size	Max Res	Weight	Active Matrix LCD	XtraView technology	OSM* on-screen controls
MultiSync LCD2010™	20.1"	1280x1024	27.5 lbs/16.5 lbs w/o stand	yes	yes	yes
MultiSync LCD1810™	18.1"	1280x1024	22 lbs/12 lbs w/o stand	yes	yes	yes
MultiSync LCD1510™	15"	1024x768	15.4 lbs/8.5 lbs w/o stand	yes	yes	yes
MultiSync LCD1510V™	15"	1024x768	14.8 lbs/8.3 lbs w/o stand	yes	no	yes

All models are compatible with PC, Mac,* workstation or any VESA compliant analog RGB signal, no special card required.

*OptiShield protective glass and MicroTouch touch screen are factory options available on the MultiSync LCD1510, LCD1510V and LCD2010 only.

For more information on these new LCD monitors or our current 14" models, call 1-800-NEC-INFO or visit us at www.nec.com or www.xtraview.com.

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The flexibility of portrait or landscape displays. A separate power supply for universal mounting on a wall, stand or arm. Optional MicroTouch™ touch screen capability and OptiShield™ protective glass.*

Less space, weight and energy consumption. And at 20," the MultiSync® LCD2010 even boasts the largest viewing area of any LCD monitor. Hmmm. Maybe less really is more.

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MultiSync LCD2000™

MultiSync LCD1510
MultiSync LCD2000

MultiSync LCD400™

MultiSync LCD1510

MultiSync LCD2000

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My PC's having an identity crisis.
It thinks it's my stereo system.

My PC used to just run. Now it does the tango, salsa and cha-cha-cha. I conquer game-villains with arcade-like, 3-D sound and play CDs that have me swaying like a symphony. There's always been music in my computer. I just realized how to get it out. **USB Digital Speakers.** No sound card. No manuals. No rebooting. Just pure, digital sound without the installation hassle. For more information, **call 1-800-835-3506 or visit us at www.usbaudio.philips.com**

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Office in your POCKET

BY LESLIE AYERS AND PRESTON GRALLA

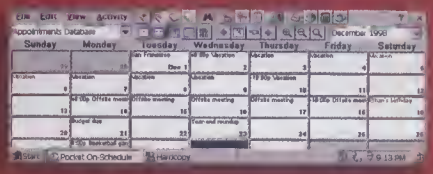
Size matters. In this case, the smaller the better. With storage and memory at a premium for Palm PDAs and Windows CE devices, choose your software wisely.

If you've been using your Palm OS or Windows CE handheld for storing basic contact info or playing solitaire, you'll be surprised at how much more you can fit in your pocket: information managers, e-mail and browser software, fax programs, graphics apps, expense trackers, and even GPS-enabled maps.

But selecting software that works with your particular handheld PC is not always painless. For example, programs written for handheld CE devices won't necessarily run on palmtop CE machines—and vice versa. To smooth your ride, we've handpicked the best apps for Palm OS and Windows CE—many of them free. Download them all from www.pccomputing.com/pocket. For even more Palm titles, check out ZDNet's www.palmpilotsoftware.com.

DO IT ALL FROM THE PALM OF YOUR HAND: CHECK E-MAIL, TRACK EXPENSES, BROWSE THE WEB, AND EVEN PLAY GAMES

- **For all the news that fits on your 3Com Palm III or IBM WorkPad: Get AvantGo (above).**
- **Toss your paper organizer. Use your Palm III instead.**
- **Make quick sketches, read novels, send faxes, and more.**



- **Stay on top of life's details with Pocket On-Schedule for Windows CE (above).**
- **Slick utilities turbocharge the pocket-size OS.**
- **Track expenses—and your movements on a map.**

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PALM SOFTWARE

It's not just a personal digital assistant, it's a way of life. So it seems, given the number of homegrown apps available for the Palm OS. Here are our favorites. Get them all at www.pccomputing.com/pocket.

PRODUCT*	Price	Verdict
Actual Software MultiMail Professional (817) 461-3480 *InfoLink No. 621*	**$60**	☆☆☆☆☆ You've got mail. MultiMail lets you retrieve it from all your POP3, IMAP4, and SMTP accounts directly—no HotSync necessary. The Conduit Pack lets you sync MultiMail with your Windows e-mail program too.
Aportis Technologies AportisDoc Mobile Edition (888) 276-7847 *InfoLink No. 622*	**$30**	☆☆☆☆☆ Forget lugging that 5-pound hardback tome around. Read it on your Palm III instead. To peruse books, reference works, newsletters, and even sports schedules, get this slick document reader—which lets you set bookmarks and search options, and control fonts. A free version gives you text browsing only.
AvantGo Client (650) 638-3399 *InfoLink No. 623*	**$100**	☆☆☆☆☆ You can take it with you. Grab Web or intranet pages—images too—and transfer them to your PDA. A must-have for info junkies who can't miss a day of CNN.com or for road warriors who have to travel light.
DataViz Desktop To Go (800) 733-0030 *InfoLink No. 624*	**$50**	☆☆☆☆☆ Microsoft Outlook users: Looking for a way to update your contact and schedule info on your Palm PDA? Use this instant synchronization utility. Set it up once and never think about it again.
DeLorme Street Atlas USA (800) 227-1656 *InfoLink No. 625*	**$55**	☆☆☆☆☆ Never get lost again. Street Atlas USA is a PC-based program, but you can download point-to-point driving directions to your Palm device. Or add DeLorme's sleek new GPS receiver, EarthMate ($200), and make sure you stay on course.
Alexander Hinds BackupBuddy intellisys.base.org *InfoLink No. 626*	**$15**	☆☆☆☆ Back it up. Back it all up. Without BackupBuddy you can't be sure your files and apps are safe. Advanced features let you select which files and apps to duplicate and which to ignore.
Bozidar Benc LauncherIII www.benc.hr *InfoLink No. 627*	**Free**	☆☆☆☆ Give your Palm III or WorkPad a free makeover. LauncherIII adds customizable tabs at the top of the screen so you can move between applications instantly. The trash can—for holding applications you want to delete—is a nice touch.
Concept Kitchen Small Talk Deluxe (415) 252-3333 *InfoLink No. 628*	**$80**	☆☆☆☆ Toss your tattered copy of Berlitz's French phrase book. On your next trip to Europe, take your PDA instead—and Small Talk. It's a pocket-size interpreter, featuring common sentences travelers use in French, Spanish, German, and Italian.
Cutting Edge Software Quicksheet (972) 473-8710 *InfoLink No. 629*	**$50**	☆☆☆☆ You can crunch numbers in a spreadsheet using your PDA—but you just might go blind doing it. If you've got to have those figures, Quicksheet features 32 financial, statistical, scientific, and other functions. It syncs directly with Microsoft Excel, so you can transfer data back and forth effortlessly.

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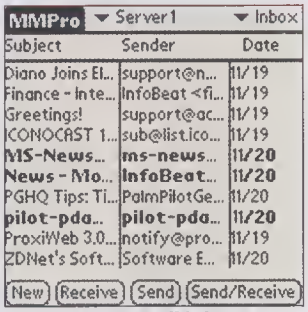
RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE



New Mail **MultiMail lets you download messages to your PDA directly from the Net.**

Info Anywhere **AvantGo Client keeps you up to date on the latest news and more.**

Free Makeover **Overhaul the Palm interface with LauncherIII.**

Bonjour, Petits Amis **Forget language lessons; grab Small Talk instead.**

(continued on page 226)

16 MB

Pure Graphics POWER

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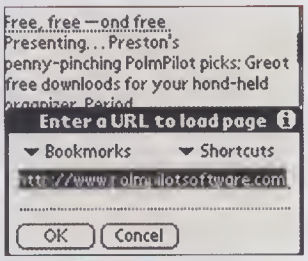
PALM SOFTWARE (continued from page 224)

PRODUCT*	Price	Verdict
DaggerWare HackMaster www.daggerware.com *InfoLink No. 630*	$5	☆☆☆☆ There are hundreds of free and low-cost patches available for download that let you customize the PalmOS. HackMaster handles them with aplomb, doing the dirty work of installing and updating patches and making sure they're in the right sequence.
Fighter Pilot Software GolfTrac www.fps.com *InfoLink No. 631*	$30	☆☆☆☆ The guys in your foursome will love you. Or they'll hate you because you're keeping track of every putt and penalty stroke on your Palm III. No more fudging handicaps either. You can even export your scorecard as a text doc.
Kyle Poole Kyle's Quest www.kpoole.com *InfoLink No. 632*	$15	☆☆☆☆ Put a little adventure into your life—literally. Kyle's Quest is a minuscule 49K game, but it's packed with surprising twists and turns. This version comes with one level, but you can download more or even create your own.
ProxiNet ProxiWeb www.proxinet.com *InfoLink No. 633*	Free	☆☆☆☆ Grab hold of the Web. Take along your portable modem, then connect to any site on the Internet and browse with ProxiWeb.
Smartcode Software HandFax (619) 597-7544 *InfoLink No. 634*	$50	☆☆☆☆ This fax machine fits in your pocket. HandFax lets you send faxes from your PDA—complete with cover page or memo. You can even create a custom logo for cover pages using the included graphics tools.
TealPoint Software TealPaint www.tealpoint.com *InfoLink No. 635*	$17	☆☆☆☆ It's Windows Paint for PalmOS, complete with a library of brushes, fill styles, and fonts. Better yet, you have the added control of drawing with the stylus (but no color). Export your works of art to your PC in BMP format.
ICQ for PalmPilot www.mirabilis.com *InfoLink No. 636*	Free	☆☆☆ Chat it up on the Internet, even when all you've got is your PalmPilot and a portable modem. Use ICQ's reminder services so you won't forget a chat date.
Mobile Generation Software Mobile Account Manager www.mobile-generation.com *InfoLink No. 637*	$20	☆☆☆ Who needs a secretary? You don't, if you have Account Manager to store important numbers for you—PINs, passwords, calling card codes, bank account numbers, and more. Your assistant might take a bribe, but only you can access your encrypted info with a single password in Account Manager.
Scott Ludwig Pocket Chess; www.eskimo.com/~scottlu *InfoLink No. 638*	Free	☆☆☆ Bring along PocketChess on your next flight and skip the tired movies. You can beat your PDA every time in this chess game, as long as you keep it set at the lowest of eight difficulty levels. Otherwise, prepare for defeat.
Yoshimitsu Kanai Abroad www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Peaks/9768 *InfoLink No. 639*	$20	☆☆☆ Be at home no matter where you are in the world. Abroad helps you with currency exchange and converting foreign units of measure. It also has a database of information on more than 260 countries, including capital cities, currencies, and time zones.
Zoskware ExpenzPro www.zoskware.com *InfoLink No. 640*	$40	☆☆☆ Your wallet's 3 inches thick with receipts that you keep meaning to enter in your checkbook register. There's a better way: Track daily expenses with ExpenzPro. Then sync the info with your PC and import it to your accounting program.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK.

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE



Browse Away Plug into the Web with the help of ProxiWeb.

Palm Artist Create black-and-white mini masterpieces with TealPaint.

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WINDOWS CE SOFTWARE

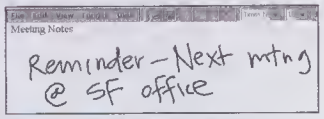
It's Windows, only smaller. Be sure the apps you download work with your handheld's processor: either MIPS or SH3. To check, right-click on My Handheld PC and select Properties. Most palmtops use a version of MIPS.

PRODUCT*	Price	Verdict
Ilium Software eWallet (888) 632-5388 *InfoLink No. 641*	**$30**	★★★★★ You're drowning in numbers, from bank PINs to calling cards to e-mail passwords. EWallet tracks and encrypts every code name and number you need to remember. Available for your desktop or notebook PC too.
Odyssey Computing Pocket On-Schedule (800) 965-7224 *InfoLink No. 642*	**$90**	★★★★★ Never miss an important deadline or meeting again. This brawny information manager tracks your contacts, schedules, to-do's, and more—wherever you happen to be. Other features: direct integration with Pocket Word and the ability to download maps from the Web.
ParaGraph CalliGrapher (800) 656-5443 *InfoLink No. 643*	**$50**	★★★★★ Quit typing on that shrimpy keyboard; jot your thoughts down instead. CalliGrapher converts your scribbles into typed text instantly. It deciphers your chicken scratch better than your longtime assistant can.
PowerToys for Microsoft Windows CE 2.0; www.microsoft.com/windows/downloads *InfoLink No. 644*	**Free**	★★★★★ A do-it-all collection of add-ons for your WinCE handheld. Pump up CE with a paint program and custom sounds. Plus capture business-card info via infrared, snag e-mail addresses from your in-box instantly, and scan your day from a single window.
Developer One Access Panel Platinum Edition www.developerone.com *InfoLink No. 645*	**$28**	★★★★ Can't get the hang of writing with a stylus? Tired of squinting at the microscopic onscreen keyboard? AccessPanel beefs up your CE palmtop's input options. Create custom tags and insert contact info with a tap.
Exesoft CommandCE www.exesoft.net *InfoLink No. 646*	**$19**	★★★★ Don't give Windows CE's anemic file manager the time of day. Get CommandCE instead. View your files in a tree format, sort by file type and size, and more.
Ilium Software eSportsCard (888) 632-5388 *InfoLink No. 647*	**$12**	★★★★ A true fan never misses a game. And now you won't have to, thanks to eSportsCard. It puts schedules for football, baseball, hockey, basketball, and other sports at your fingertips. Sort by league, team, and date.
Ilium Software Tipster (888) 632-5388 *InfoLink No. 648*	**Free**	★★★★ Calculate the tip on business lunches faster than the busboy can refill your water glass. A lot faster. This handy WinCE palmtop app computes gratuities—standard, big, and small—as well as sales tax.
Microsoft Pocket Internet Explorer www.microsoft.com/windows/downloads *InfoLink No. 649*	**Free**	★★★★ If you don't have this Web browser, you don't know what you're missing. Download software directly to your handheld PC from within Pocket IE. It's smaller than your desktop, but it's still the Web.
Ruksun Software Technologies Scotty FTP; www.ruksun.com *InfoLink No. 650*	**$30**	★★★★ *Argghl* You forgot to grab the one file you needed before hitting the road—again. ScottyFTP to the rescue. Use this slick file-transfer utility to send or receive files over the Web or the office server.

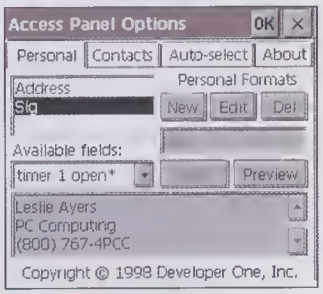
*FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK.

Numbers Game eWallet remembers your PINs, passwords, account numbers, and more—so you can worry about more important things.

On the Move Keep track of your contacts, deadlines, and important dates from anywhere with Pocket On-Schedule.



Sign Here CalliGrapher converts whatever you jot down into typed text. Its accuracy is phenomenal, even with the worst penmanship.



Easy Access Use Access Panel to create instant entries on your palmtop.

RATINGS: ★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★ ACCEPTABLE ★★ POOR ★ UNACCEPTABLE

(continued on page 230)

$25 CASH BACK!

Protecting your data has never been such a bargain!

The PowerQuest® PowerBundle includes these powerful solutions:

PartitionMagic® 4.0 - The world's best-selling partitioning software. Protect your data while safely running multiple operating systems.

Drive Image™ 2.0 - The world's best-selling backup solution. Create a compressed image file of your hard drive and recover all of your data after a crash.

McAfee® VirusScan® - The world's most trusted name in desktop virus detection. Protect your computer system from known viruses.

Buy the PowerBundle today and get $25 cash back from PowerQuest!
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Babbage's • Business Depot • J & R Computers • Electronic's Boutique

Infolink 307 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

www.powerquest.com

POWER® PQ QUEST

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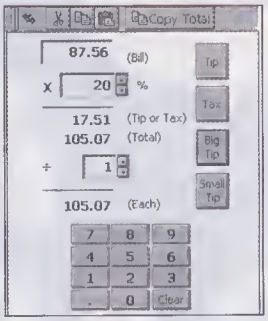
WINDOWS CE SOFTWARE

(continued from page 228)

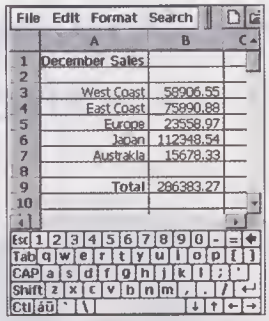
PRODUCT*	Price	Verdict
Sierra Imaging Image Expert CE www.sierraimaging.com *InfoLink No. 651*	$50	☆☆☆☆ You don't need a desktop or notebook PC to *ooh* and *ahh* over your digital snapshots. With Image Expert CE, send images from your digital camera directly to your Windows CE handheld device. Then annotate them with voice, handwritten notes, or typed text, and share them via e-mail or infrared.
Steve P. Miller Pocket UnZip www.wolfenet.com/~stevemil/punzip.html *InfoLink No. 652*	Free	☆☆☆☆ Eliminate the PC middleman. With Pocket UnZip, download zipped files directly from the Web to your CE handheld device and expand them instantly. Use this freebie to save on storage space too.
Thieves and Kings Thieves for WinCE (800) 704-7277 *InfoLink No. 653*	$15	☆☆☆☆ Warning: This takeoff on solitaire is highly addictive. Try to clear the board of 35 cards using the discard pile. The face-up card can take the next card up or down, except in the case of aces and kings. Can you tell we're obsessed?
BFM Casino www.bfmsoft.com *InfoLink No. 654*	$35	☆☆☆ You'll miss the Elvis impersonators, but BFM Casino offers a nice slice of Vegas with ten gambling games, including blackjack, craps, poker, roulette, and slots.
BSquare bTrack (888) 820-4500 *InfoLink No. 655*	$90	☆☆☆ A cab ride here, a bellhop's tip there. Business travel expenses add up fast. Keep track of them all painlessly with bTrack—even split costs between different clients and projects. Then transfer the info to your Windows-based expense-reporting package.
Grundle Software SpaceHogCE www.grundlesoftware.com *InfoLink No. 656*	$13	☆☆☆ Keep your WinCE device lean and mean with this simple but indispensable utility. It lists every file by size so you can decide which ones are too porky to hang onto.
Haus of Maus BugMe www.hausofmaus.com *InfoLink No. 657*	$15	☆☆☆ Better than electronic sticky notes—but not as obnoxious as a nagging spouse. BugMe keeps you on your toes by flashing reminders that you scribble onscreen.
Microsoft Expedia Pocket Streets www.microsoft.com/expedia/streets/pocket.htm *InfoLink No. 658*	Free	☆☆☆ You, lost? No way. Wherever you are, you've always got a map in your WinCE handheld—even if you're just pretending to consult your contacts or schedules. Consider it one more way to avoid asking for directions.
Surerange Analysis Pocket Spreadsheet www.surerange.com *InfoLink No. 659*	$56	☆☆☆ We can guarantee you'll be squinting. But this spreadsheet app for palmtop CE devices is better than nothing. Pocket Spreadsheet supports a range of common formulas. Too bad it doesn't sync with Excel.
Surerange Analysis US Area Codes www.surerange.com *InfoLink No. 660*	Free	☆☆☆ Life used to be simpler. So did area codes. They're changing so fast, you're never sure what part of the country you're calling anymore. But now you can be, with this handy listing for your palmtop CE device.

*FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK.

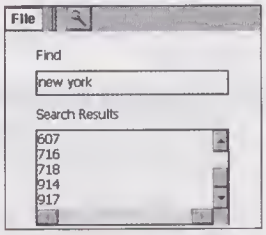


Quick Tip Impress your friends: Tipster calculates the tip in seconds.

File Fetcher Grab or send files over the Internet with ease, thanks to Scotty FTP. Transfer documents from the office server too.



Quite a Spread Create real spreadsheets using formulas with Pocket Spreadsheet.



Code Keeper This handy utility from Surerange keeps track of area codes.

RATINGS: ☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

Does the thought of no partitions terrify you?

(No wonder your computer keeps freezing up.)

Create, Resize, Move and Convert partitions with PartitionMagic® 4.0

PartitionMagic 4.0 works with Windows 98 and includes a free copy of BootMagic. Buy it now and get $15 back from PowerQuest.

Visit your local software reseller or call 1-800-379-2566 or +1-801-437-8900 for details.

You couldn't operate without partitions. What makes you think your computer can? Partitioning your hard drive plays an essential role in maintaining your computer—preventing conflicts, protecting data, and dramatically improving efficiency. Best of all, partitioning lets you reclaim up to 40% of your wasted hard-drive space! And now, with even greater functionality and ease of use, PartitionMagic 4.0 puts all the benefits of hard-drive partitioning within easy reach of anyone. Create and resize partitions on the fly without losing data. Effortlessly move applications between partitions, converting from FAT to FAT32 and back again. Or use BootMagic,™ included with your purchase of PartitionMagic, to manage and switch between multiple operating systems. Whatever the task, PartitionMagic will help you get it done! So don't get caught with your pants down. *Get PartitionMagic.*

Partitioning better organizes and protects your data and makes running multiple OSs safe and easy!

www.powerquest.com

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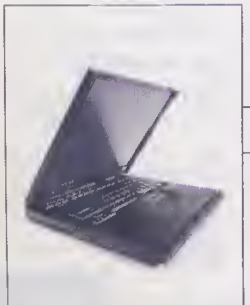
Infolink 308 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

POWER® PQ QUEST

Estimated authorized IBM Reseller Price for model 2626-20U. Actual prices may vary. MHz denotes [illegible] processor internal clock speed only, other factors may also affect application performance. [illegible] with reference to HDD capacity. PCs referenced in this ad include an operating system. IBM product names are trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation. Intel Inside and Pentium are registered trademarks of Intel Corporation. [illegible]998 IBM Corp. All rights reserved.

intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

RULES? WHAT RULES.



INTRODUCING THE IBM THINKPAD® 390 SERIES

Who said notebook computers were just for the big budget guys? The ThinkPad 390 gives small business professionals a fully integrated desktop alternative at a small business price. It's got a huge active matrix screen, a built-in CD-ROM and floppy drive, high-performance stereo speakers, and a keyboard so roomy you forget it's a notebook. All the power you need. All at a price you can handle. See the full line of ThinkPads at **www.ibm.com/thinkpad** or call 1 800 426 7255, ext. 5020.

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Intel® processors (up to 266 MHz) / Up to 4.3GB hard drive / 12.1" or 14.1" screen / CD-ROM / From $1,799

IBM

Digital Christ

Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, whatever. Any way you look at it, 'tis the season to hurl yourself into debt to show your friends and relatives just how much you love them. The trick is giving the gifts that will make them love you back.

Here's a tip: No one has visions of cheese-and-sausage samplers dancing in their heads, and only a strange few will have trouble falling asleep on Christmas Eve because they can't wait to unwrap the Salad Spitter. But everyone wants to find gadgets in their stockings, no one can resist this holiday season's CD-ROMs, and even we drool at the thought of ripping the bow off 1998's big-ticket technologies.

FORGET THIGHMASTERS. FORGET SOAP-ON-A-ROPE. WE'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE GIFT LIST COVERED, FROM $7 TO $75,000.

But there's another advantage to high-tech holidays: e-shopping. Buying your gifts over the Internet means you never have to battle for a parking spot, stand in line, or hear the high-pitched caroling of mall elves.

And talk about selection. From the most powerful desktop system to a copper tongue scraper, you can find online gifts for everyone on your list.

BY THE EDITORS OF PC COMPUTING

mas

Gadget Stocking

Old-timers always talk about how they used to get coal in their stockings. Fossil fuel as a gift is now passé, and its modern-day home-heating equivalent, nuclear sludge, makes a lousy gift. Gadgets are far better.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Shutterbugs can take blackmail pictures of their drunken coworkers at the holiday party with the **Nikon Coolpix 900,** a $799 digital camera with a feature set longer than Santa's list. Then add the perfect companion, SmartDisk's $100 **FlashPath,** a cradle for the camera's SmartMedia storage that slides into your floppy drive.

InfoLink Numbers: Nikon, *761;* SmartDisk, *762.*

THE ARTIST

For the film student or the irritating uncle who takes hours of footage at every family gathering, the $1,799 **Canon Vistura** not only captures unrivaled digital video but still pictures as well. And though the Vistura has built-in autoediting, your digital Fellini would be better served with Ulead's **MediaStudio Pro 5.0** ($549). If tape isn't your artist's preferred medium, try CalComp's $129 **Creation Station** digital tablet with its pen and wireless mouse for drawing, writing, and photo retouching.

InfoLink Numbers: CalComp, *763;* Canon, *764;* Ulead Systems, *765.*

THE MUSICIAN

Launch your musician friends' careers by giving them Smart and Friendly's 8X write, 20X read **CD Rocket** ($999). They'll want to play their newly minted CDs through the crisply booming, USB-ready **Philips DSS370** speaker system ($199) or transfer them to minidisc via Sharp's **MiniDisc Portable Player/Recorder** ($399).

InfoLink Numbers: Philips Electronics, *766;* Sharp, *767;* Smart and Friendly, *768.*

THE GAMER

Gamers are a passionate lot. If their wish lists include a video card, only a Voodoo2 board like Diamond Multimedia's 12MB **Monster 3D II** ($250) will appease them. But seeing the game isn't enough; they must feel it too. The answer is Logitech's $129 **WingMan Force** joystick. For fans of the **Sony PlayStation** ($129) who demand better graphics than a TV can muster, there's **Aims Lab's Jam** ($79), which exports console action to PC monitors.

InfoLink Numbers: Aims Lab, *769;* Diamond Multimedia, *770;* Logitech, *771;* Sony, *772.*

Stuffers

THE TECHIE

Does your favorite nerd have a home network yet? The $200 **Diamond Multimedia HomeFree Wireless** networking kit lets two PCs share resources over radio waves with a throughput of 1Mbps. And no geek could pass up Rosetta Laboratories' **WinRadio WR1000i,** a brilliant $500 gadget that converts a PC into a wide-band receiver—perfect for listening in on UFO transmissions. And Network Associates' **McAfee Office** is a techie's best friend—ten full-power, system-expanding utilities in a single box for just $99.

InfoLink Numbers: Diamond Multimedia, *777;* Network Associates, *778;* Rosetta Laboratories, *779.*

THE PRODIGY

You and your kid will fight over who gets to play with this gift first. Make sure you win. Lego Mindstorm's **Robotics Invention System** lets you build robots and then, using intuitive PC software, program them to accomplish various tasks. The $200 kit comes with two motors, a light sensor, an IR transmitter, and over 700 Lego pieces that are compatible with the ones from your own childhood.

InfoLink Number: Lego Mindstorm, *776.*

THE BUSINESS TRAVELER

Touring at Yuletide is tough, but your road warrior can keep in touch with the $199 **Sony FunMail** video e-mail system. To stay close to you and the office when he's worlds away, give him Nokia's **9000i Communicator,** an $899 hybrid digital phone and PDA. And for the eternal airport layovers that inevitably strike at Christmastime there's Noise Cancellation Technologies' **NoiseBuster Extreme** headphones ($69).

InfoLink Numbers: Noise Cancellation Technologies, *773;* Nokia, *774;* Sony, *775.*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERNIE FRIEDLANDER

CD-Ron's Gift Picks

Everyone has a neck, so ties have long been surefire gifts. Now everyone has a CD-ROM drive, so the entire landscape of Christmas gift giving has changed. CD-Ron has an idea for everyone on your list.

For the Windows 98 Fan

Your giftee just got Windows 98 and wants something to show it off. Forget Microsoft Plus Pack. Instead, fill the stocking with Gizmos 98, a collection of visually dazzling utilities. They include calendars, financial calculators, clocks, card games, music CD players, and a bunch more. Yes, you could live a full life without them, but they have the high-resolution photographic zip that makes Windows 98 the prettiest GUI around. And face it: Where are you going to find another Windows 98 suite this cheap?

Gizmos 98 / Play / (888) 888-7529 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 780 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Under the Hood **Check out the specs on the Millennium Falcon in Star Wars: Behind the Magic.**

For Followers of The Force

You've got this nephew who's seen *Star Wars* and its successors umpteen times. His bedroom looks like a cross between the Dagobah system and the planet Hoth. There's only one CD for him—Star Wars: Behind the Magic. It's an insider's look at the creation of the spaceships, creatures, and heroes in the movie trilogy. The CD brims with attention to detail and an artistic panache usually reserved for weird adventure games. It's sure to keep your nephew busy at least till New Year's.

Star Wars: Behind the Magic / LucasArts / (888) 532-4263 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 781 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

For the Poor Scholar

I've got this bookish uncle with good taste—impossible to shop for. I'd love to get him some scarce first edition, but he'll have to settle for a few rare books on CD-ROM from Octavo. The company has dozens of classic volumes, including Benjamin Franklin's Experiments and Observations on Electricity and Shakespeare's Poems, all in Adobe Acrobat photographic format. Amazingly, you can even search the crinkled original pages for keywords. Even my stuck-up uncle will be impressed.

Through the Microscope **View Robert Hooke's Micrographia in the Octavo Collection.**

The Octavo Digital Library / Octavo / (650) 470-0150 / $25 to $50 est. street price / *Enter 782 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

For the Severely Lonely

Aquazone Deluxe turns your monitor into a growing, real-looking aquarium. This isn't just a screen saver. Aquazone makes you feed the fish, change the filter, and treat them when they contract ick. Choose from several predesigned tanks, or the insanely bored can landscape their own. There's even an air pump that makes a distracting sound. In other words, it has all the tedium of a real aquarium except the smell.

Aquazone Deluxe / Mindscape / (800) 716-8503 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 783 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

For Earth Expatriates

We all have people on our gift lists whom we'd like to send to Mars. Now we can. Cydonia puts our smoothly rendered 3-D hero on the first mission to the red planet in an attempt to resettle human beings

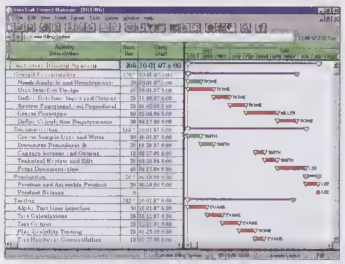
ILLUSTRATIONS BY ELIZABETH BRANDT

Laugh in the face of **deadlines.**

SureTrak. Project management success from start to finish.

Project deadlines—they're no laughing matter. So when they hand you the big project, you can be glad there's SureTrak Project Manager.®

SureTrak helps you organize and manage every aspect of every project. Just 30 minutes with the Project KickStart™ wizard maps out a realistic plan. Interactive PERT charts and graphics help you organize, prioritize and manage all your resources and tasks.



What if something changes? (And it always does.) SureTrak's powerful analysis tools let you compare resources, deadlines and costs, to make the smartest tradeoffs. Reporting features let you sort, summarize and prioritize by responsibility, phase or resource. SureTrak's Progress Spotlight™ makes updates a breeze. And integrated e-mail and Web publishing communicate the latest updates, status reports and assignments to your team.

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The Power to Save Time.™

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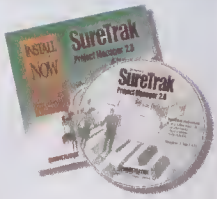
today for a FREE multimedia CD-ROM.



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Infolink 214 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Rediscover the romance and nostalgia of flying perfectly recreated WWII planes.

THEN BLOW THEM OUT OF THE SKY.

Introducing Microsoft® Combat Flight Simulator.

With the same stunningly realistic flying experience Flight Simulator is known for, only this time it's the 1940's and there's a war on. Join the Allied or Axis forces, choose your fighter, and fly missions in the Battle of Britain and the Battle over Europe.

But don't expect a sight-seeing trip. Sure, the Eiffel Tower, Royal Albert Hall and other historically accurate landmarks are there in heart-stopping 3-D graphics. Unfortunately, with black smoke pouring through the shattered cockpit of your P-47D you won't see much.

And if that isn't thrilling enough, bring in thousands of planes from the Internet and engage in deadly dogfights over scenery imported from Microsoft Flight Simulator.

That's not all. Combat Flight Simulator also supports multiplayer and force feedback technology.

So when you pull G's attacking the enemy, and the engine of your Spitfire cuts out, you'll know just how it feels. Collect your orders and find out how Microsoft Flight Simulator owners can get a $10 rebate at www.microsoft.com/games/combatfs

Microsoft®

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INTERNET GAMING ZONE
PLAY IT ON ZONE.COM

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

CD-Ron's Gift Picks

fleeing a dying Earth. The mission starts off with a crash landing. From that point on, it's up to the player to solve the problems of survival and exploration. It's an adventure game, which I usually find deadly. But this one is based on figuring out realistic solutions to possible problems, not solving some idiotic mystic puzzle.

Cydonia / DreamCatcher Interactive / (888) 661-9999, (416) 638-5000 / $40 est. street price / *Enter 784 at www.pccomputing. com/infolink*

For the Dude: Crank It Up!

Someone on your list always parked in front of MTV? Regain control of the remote by giving Music Maker V 2000. Its two CDs turn the least musically gifted person you know—that would be me—into a one-man record company. I drag bits of music from collections of rock, techno, hip-hop, and other styles onto as many as 16 tracks. Music Maker automatically adjusts pitch and tempo so that the snatches of music flow together as if I knew what I was doing. With the companion Live Act Pool CD, I drag and drop visuals like psychedelic animation and sexy babes to create a video to match my musical creation.

Music Maker V 2000, $39 est. street price / **Live Act Pool,** $20 est. street price / Magix Entertainment / (888) 866-2449 / *Enter 785 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

For the Truly Weird

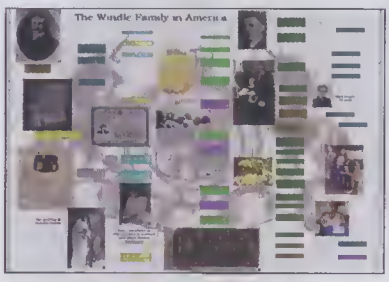
I think I've played this game before. No, that was the time I woke up on All Souls' Day south of Nuevo Laredo with a peyote hangover. Grim Fandango is a puzzle-filled adventure populated by characters that evoke Mexican folklore, art deco, and film noir. You control Manny Calavera, a working stiff in the Land of the Dead, who is essentially roaming a 3-D afterlife looking for a clue. There's a lot of classic story-telling involving the passage of an innocent through a dark realm to redemption—you know, Archetypes of Lit 203. And it's got lots of jokes too.

South of the Border **Bored to death? You won't be when you prance the Grim Fandango.**

Grim Fandango / LucasArts / (888) 532-4263 / $40 est. street price / *Enter 786 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

For the Well Rooted

Even if your family's in-house genealogist already has Family Tree Maker, Generations Deluxe is a welcome addition. Generations has three CDs with info on 57 million people and built-in links to 27,000 genealogy sites on the Web. Plus it has a wealth of features for creating printed family trees, which is what you want to wind up with anyway. The program provides all the artistic touches; you supply the family photos, maps, birth certificates, and anything else you want to include.



Historical Revisionism **Make your ancestors look as good as you wished they were in Generations.**

Generations Deluxe / Sierra Home / (800) 757-7707 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 787 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

For the Baby in The Boomer

Cousin Bob is suffering through middle-aged depression. He needs something to fight for, something to live for, something to die for. Like Centipede. Remember the arcade game in which you fought off a never-ending attack by bugs and spiders, in which death was inevitable, but there was oh so much glory in the battle? Those days are back with a vengeance in a 3-D form of Centipede for the PC.

Centipede / Hasbro Interactive / (800) 683-5847 / $40 list price / *Enter 788 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

RIVA
TNT
"The first word that comes to my mind when describing NVIDIA's new TNT 3D graphic accelerator is WOW! The visual quality and frame rates... were astounding."
"...performance was better than any 2D/3D combo card I've seen. On top of that, games like Quake II and FLIGHT SIMULATOR 98 looked spectacular at 1024x768 and 1280x1024 (respectively)."
—Computer Gaming World, November 1998.

"...performance so extraordinary it will change the next generation of games."

"Imagine Quake II at 1600x1200 at over 30fps. Imagine DeathMatch Quake II at 1600x1200 — you can see the other guy before he sees you. The TNT will likely be the hot ticket in AGP cards in the near future."

—Computer Gaming World, September 1998

"A true 'supercard'...offers complete 2D and 3D compatibility, as well as the best Direct3D performance available...gaming will never be the same at resolutions of 1024x768 and above."

—Adrenaline Vault, www.avault.com

- RIVA TNT™ 128-bit 3D/2D and video accelerator
- 16MB of memory for resolutions up to 1920x1200
- 250MHz RAMDAC for refresh rates up to 160Hz
- Output to monitor or TV (s-video & composite)
- Windows 95, 98, NT and OpenGL support
- Lifetime warranty and unlimited toll-free support
- Available for AGP and PCI bus

"...competing in an arena with the likes of the Savage 3D, Banshee and G200. All of these it will beat handily...they are the Kings of the 2D/3D combo card!"

—RivaZone, www.rivazone.com

NVIDIA

STB www.stb.com

STB products are available at:

BEST BUY COMPUSA Fry's Babbage's electronics boutique CDW NECX PC WAREHOUSE 1-800-397-8508

Infolink 363 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Editors' Picks

Sure, we're spoiled. We get to play with the coolest technologies on the planet. But tragically, none of them is ours to keep. So of all the stuff that's teased us this year, here's what we're adding to our own holiday wish lists.

Who Needs to Eat?

Everyone has a price, and I just found mine. The stunning $19,500 **Leica S1** looks more like art than a digital camera. There's the brushed-metal body, clean lines, and spare design. Three simple buttons control the settings. And two unadorned handles invite you to pick it up. The 5,140-by-5,140-pixel digital images (that's 80MB per shot!) are as close as digital gets to the quality of professional film. I want one. ***Wendy Taylor***

Leica S1 / Leica / (800) 222-0118 / $19,500 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 789*

Positively Charged

Sure, it's an eye-pleaser—a superbright, razor-sharp 17-inch display in a sleek black package. But the amazing audio of the **Proton MM750i** hooked me instantly. I'd given up on multimedia monitors—why pay extra for tinny sound? But with its built-in tower subwoofer and five speakers, the Proton MM750i changed my tune. Even the Windows 98 startup chimes sound impressive on this booming monitor. So go ahead, turn it all the way up. ***Leslie Ayers***

Proton MM750i / Proton / (888) 377-6866 / $499 list price / *InfoLink No. 790*

Digitally Mastered

Check out the Walkman for the Web age. Instead of cassette tapes, the **Diamond Multimedia Rio PMP300** stores and plays digital MP3 tracks that you can download straight from the Web or sample from your favorite CDs. MP3 is the audio file format that compresses files to tiny sizes but retains killer sound quality. The Zippo-size Rio stores up to one hour of music on its 32MB of flash memory. And since the Rio has no moving parts, songs never skip. ***Alexei Oreskovic***

Rio PMP300 / Diamond Multimedia / (800) 468-5846 / $200 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 791*

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Micron™ NetFRAME 2101 • **Processor:** Intel® Pentium® II processor 333MHz • **Cache:** 512KB internal L2 ECC cache • **Memory:** 64MB ECC SDRAM • **Hard Drive**: 4GB Ultra Wide SCSI-3 hard drive* • **CD-ROM**: 32X max speed CD-ROM drive • **Sound System**: PCI 64-voice Wavetable sound • **Warranty**: 5-year/3-year Micron Power℠ limited warranty; Dedicated server technical support, 7x24; 1-year next-business-day on-site service††† • **Software Included**: Intel LANDesk Server Manager, Emergency Management Port Console • **Also Includes**: Supports up to two Intel Pentium II processors, Intel 440BX PCI chip set, 100MHz front side bus and up to 1GB memory support, Integrated Symbios PCI Ultra Wide SCSI-3 dual channel controller, Intel PRO/100+ Server Adapter, Integrated RAID upgrade option, 5 expansion slots: 3 PCI, 1 ISA, 1 shared PCI/ISA, 10 drive bays: 1 external 3.5", 3 external 5.25", 6 internal 1.0" hard drive bays (54GB max.), Integrated SVGA graphics 2MB, Microsoft mouse, 104-key enhanced PS/2 keyboard, 3.5" floppy drive • **Starting at just $1,899**

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Infolink 301 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

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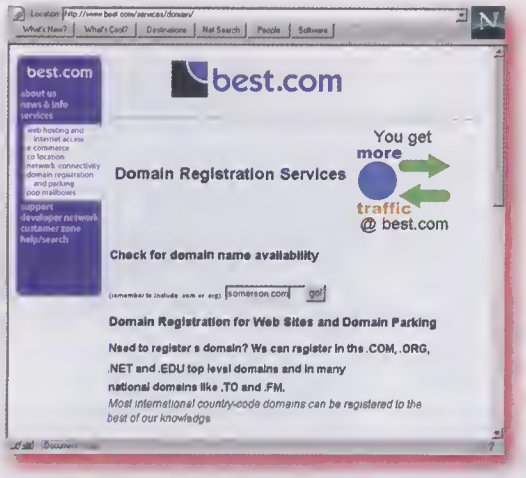

Are you master of your own domain? Want to lock up a .com Web site based on your name? Do it before someone else does. What better gift to a family member? You could go to www.internic.net and try it yourself. But **Best.com** makes it almost one-button easy to register *yourname*.com—or hundreds of clever URLs you can resell later—and then "park" them on Best's server. Or for a small fee Best will happily host them for you. ***Paul Somerson***

The SlyCam

I can't be bogged down with big, bulky cameras. I enjoy lurking about, snapping pictures on the sly à la James Bond. Here's the perfect stocking stuffer for me. The **Sony DXC-LS1** camera—about the size of a lipstick case—slips into my pocket or purse. It's so small people hardly notice it, but it's a real camera. It even has a 3X zoom. So I'm off to infiltrate Microsoft's compound—ninja style—to take some covert pics of the Windows 2000 blueprints. Where do you think we get all those Undocumented Secrets from? ***Liesl La Grange Noble***

Sony DXC-LS1 / Sony / (800) 686-7669 / $1,695 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 792*

Run Away with the Dish

Forget the hype about DSL and cable modems—I want fast Internet access today. The answer? Hughes Network's **DirecDuo,** which delivers up to 400Kbps downstream and satellite TV. Plus Hughes's new USB adapter is a snap to install and use, and new pricing is easy on the wallet. Beam me up, Hughes! ***Rich Schwerin***

DirecDuo / Hughes Network Systems / (800) 347-3272 / $399 est. street price; starts at $20 per month each for Internet service and TV service; fees vary for installation and activation / *InfoLink No. 793*

She Called It the Love Seat

Not since the electric chair has there been such a vicious place to take a load off. The BSG Laboratories **Intensor** is an ergonomic gaming throne that sports five embedded speakers and an external subwoofer for pure audio violence. The experience is so real that after playing Quake I had to seek therapy at my local VA hospital. ***Martin Sargent***

Intensor / BSG Laboratories / (800) 274-5227 / $300 to $600 est. street price depending on features / *InfoLink No. 794*

Editors' Picks

Techno Music

If you still think combining a clock and a radio is a technological achievement, wait till you see the sleek **Sharp Electronics MD-X8.** It has it all: a MiniDisc player/recorder, three CD trays, an AM/FM tuner, SRS 3-D sound, and two-way speakers. But the clincher is that you can connect it to your PC through a digital input port. Then, using an optional $249 PC Card digital output adapter, you can download files from the Net and play them through the speakers. Or, if you think you can outmaneuver the FBI, record files onto MiniDisc. ***Lulit Bezuayehu***

Sharp MD-X8 / Sharp Electronics / (800) 237-4277 / $800 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 797*

Black Christmas

I don't want just any PC under the tree—make mine the ultrasleek **IBM Aptiva SE7.** It's loaded with a 450MHz Pentium II processor, the superfast IBM Deskstar 16.8GB hard drive, 128MB of RAM, and a DVD drive. Not only does it look cool, its split design is smart too: I can stash the main chassis in the closet and leave just the essentials on my desk. Oh, and Santa: Don't forget IBM's matching 15-inch black flat-panel display ($1,099 extra) for even more cool space-saving. ***Christine Wendin***

Aptiva SE7 / IBM / (800) 426-7235 ext. 4340 / $2,399 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 795*

Mayday! Send Stock Quotes!

It just got harder to get away from it all. The **Magellan GSC 100** handheld global positioning system includes integrated two-way e-mail that lets you send and receive messages anywhere on the planet via a constellation of low earth-orbiting satellites. Identify your position, track your course, and communicate the information to anyone, anywhere. A must-have for your next South Seas sailing trip or Amazon trek. It'll also look impressive in your Range Rover. ***Gordon Bass***

Magellan GSC 100 / Magellan / (800) 669-4477 / $999 list price / *InfoLink No. 796*

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In Debt and On

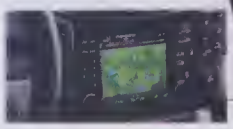
You are a filthy capitalist pig. A fleshy monument to conspicuous consumption. And the envy of the world. If you can afford these gifts, you've done something either just right or very, very wrong.

Wretched Excess — *Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh*

The 1999 **Porsche 911 Carrera Coupe.** Even your Aunt Ruth would get looks if she drove around in one of these sex machines. But why in a computer magazine? Did the editors just want an excuse to borrow one? Heavens, no. The car has a computer system more sophisticated than the mainframes of many small universities. The cost? A mere $75,740.

Parking Assistance Ultrasonic sensors at the rear of the car trigger audible signals that chime more rapidly as you near an obstacle.

Stereo Tell the tuner to pick up only your style of music. Road trouble ahead? Traffic snafus and breaking news are automatically broadcast as the action unfolds. Excessive? Deliciously so.



Trip Computer A CD-ROM drive reads discs by Navigation Technologies that give you a remarkably detailed map of your surroundings as a GPS receiver pinpoints your location.

Liquid Crystal A display embedded in the dash shows average speed and fuel consumption, expected time of arrival, and how far you can drive with the gas left in the tank.

You're cruising through the desert in your 911 one starry night when the 75-mph speed limit seems puritanical. With the CIA-quality night vision of the CyberEye 002 scope, you can turn off the headlights and whip past the smokies at twice the legal limit.

CyberEye 002 / Hitek / (800) 546-4448 / $1,395 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 798*

Long, thin, and beautiful, the **Pioneer PDP-V501X** plasma screen is 50 inches across and just 4 inches deep—the supermodel of display technologies. It'd be welcomed next to the scoreboard at Fenway Park, let alone in your boardroom. Its 1,280 by 768 XGA resolution supports digital and high-definition television as well as flawless, uncropped video and PC images. Damage? $22,000.

Pioneer PDP-V501X / Pioneer New Media Technologies / (800) 926-4329 / $25,000 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 799*

line

In Line or Online? Holiday Cyber Bazaar

Getting connected is far easier than getting a parking spot, so today's gift-bearing Wise Men avoid the Christmas chaos by shopping on the Internet. Everyone knows you can buy books and CDs online, but virtually every commodity is a few clicks away.

Ah, the sweet smell of a successful gift. At fragrancecounter.com you can get all the toilet water you want without overzealous clerks drenching your wrists with putrid samples. Plus you can look at all the freaky Calvin Klein ads you desire.

Last year's violent battle for Tickle Me Elmo dolls resulted in more anguished cries than giggles. Whatever goofy gewgaw the crazy tykes fixate on this year, get it at eToys.com and avoid the *Sesame Street* crimes.

Mmmm... gluttony. Prepare for Christmas dinner at cooking.com. It offers cookware, tableware, cookbooks, and specialty foods.

Golf clubs are great gifts too. A house-bound duffer can fantasize about how the new sticks will help his game right up until cruel April's dream-shattering thaw. Get the goods at bestvaluegolf.com.

Snowed In with Ron White Holiday Cyber Bizarre

$0 and under **Get an HSUS Visa Platinum Card with your giftee's pet on it (www.hsuscard.com). No annual fee, and a portion of all charges goes to the Humane Society of the United States. You know Bob Barker has one.**

$100 and under Keep the nerd in the family up to snuff with the fourth edition of *How Computers Work*. The best-seller is updated with lots of new illustrations. I know this book is good; I wrote it. Find it on the Web for less than 25 bucks (www.amazon.com). Or, for $75, buy a quarter-pound of rare Kopi Luwak, coffee made from beans that have passed through the digestive tract of a marsupial (www.bpe.com/drinks/coffee/kopiluwak/).

$10 and under Bet the person who has everything doesn't have a copper tongue scraper (www.asontv.com/products/903042461.html). For $7 it not only takes care of nasty bad breath but also reduces cavities, improves oral hygiene, and "refines taste buds"—and who wants unrefined taste buds?

$1,000 and under **I'm not even sure this is legal, but a company in the Cayman Islands makes daily trips to Cuba to get fresh, genuine stogies from the country we're taught to say nasty things about to our children (www.cuban-cigars.ky/). El cheapos—Romeo y Julieta Clarines—are $125 a box, or spring for a box of Cohiba Esplendidos at $1,000. Customs fines and legal fees extra.**

$10,000 and under Aunt Tilde's living room is missing that special touch to make it unique. How about a life-size, gold-plated suit of armor for a mere $5,310? You'll find it, other armor, and swords at Swords 'n' Stuff, serving anachronists since 1995 (www.swords-n-stuff.com/m%2dassort.html). Or if your kid's spending too much time playing computer games, he needs some balls. Get him a pinball machine. Choose from *Addams Family* and *Star Trek* themes or the ever-popular Corvette model; from $800 to $3,000 (www.pinballfun.com).

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT MATHEWS

*Capable of receiving at up to 56 Kbps and sending at up to 31.2 Kbps. Due to FCC regulations on power output, receiving speeds are limited to 53 Kbps. Actual speeds may vary. Requires compatible phone line and server equipment. Complies with both the determined V.90 ITU 56K standard and x2 technology protocols. Standard officially determined in February, 1998; ratification expected in September, 1998 †Henderson Communications Laboratories performance tests of leading internal data fax modems, June 1998. See www.3com.com/56k
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40 AMAZING THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD DO WITH A DIGITAL CAMERA OR SCANNER

You've fired up your new digital camera or scanner. You've taken photos and scanned documents at the touch of a button. Getting those images onto your PC was quick and easy. And now . . . well, there they are. Yep.

What do you do with them next?

Capturing images with a digital camera or scanner is simple. The interesting part is what you do with those images once you've got them. In the November issue we helped you choose a camera or scanner (see "Digital Camera and Scanner Superguide," page 208). Now that your new gadget is in your hot little hands, we're going to show you how to make it more than just a party trick. Digital images make your life easier and more colorful, both at work and at home.

It's easy to make a digital photo album of your favorite shots. But how about putting that album on the Web? If you're in business, no doubt you've thought of adding photos and logos to business cards, letterhead, and presentation slides, or of making your own photo ID cards. Why not use photos to sell products on the Web, or use your digital camera as a security device? With the right products and know-how, it's easier than you think to put your camera or scanner to work for you. We'll prove it: Here are 40 great ideas to get you started.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ERNIE FRIEDLANDER. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY TIMOTHY EDWARD DOWNS

BY JULIE POLITO

DESIGN LIKE A PRO

Brochures, newsletters, and presentations are the perfect place for your digital images.

PAGE 268

E-COMMERCE

We can't guarantee you'll get rich quick, but there's plenty of money to be made online. Here's how.

PAGE 260

PAPERLESS OFFICE

Documents and business cards at your fingertips, digital signatures and more. Make that paperless office a reality.

PAGE 256

FUN STUFF

Kick your creativity into high gear with personalized cards, online albums, photo e-mails, and more.

PAGE 272

SOHO SMARTS

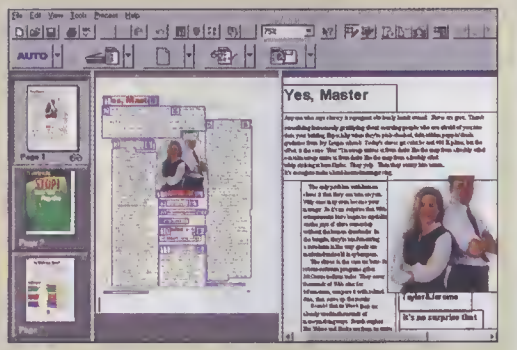
Small office often means small budget. But that shouldn't stop you from looking as slick as the big guys.

PAGE 264

Paperless Office

If you're drowning in a sea of paper or lost behind file cabinets in your office, it's time to ditch all that paper. Transform your clutter farm into a paperless office—with a digital camera or a scanner and a few key products. Just think how nice it'll be to see the top of your desk again.

VIRTUAL FILE CABINET



Most of us get so many letters, faxes, and mailings every day that if we kept them all they'd reach from here to Mars. Yet we're hesitant to toss anything—after all, today's junk mail may be tomorrow's treasure. If you know you'll need that piece of paper someday but can't spare the space, file it away electronically with a scanner and a good document-management program. Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe or ScanSoft Pagis Pro 2.0 keeps those scraps of paper off your desk and easily accessible. Store black-and-white or color documents, news clippings—whatever you need. And with a good OCR program like Caere OmniPage Pro, you can turn your scanned text into editable text, retaining the original format. You'll be more organized, and you can use the space on your desktop for more important things, like pictures of your kids and *Star Trek* memorabilia.

Caere OmniPage Pro / (800) 736-5735 / $499 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 671*

ScanSoft Pagis Pro 2.0 / (800) 432-9329 / $99 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 672*

Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe / (800) 787-7007 / $79 est. street price / *Enter 673 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

STAY IN CONTACT

You've got business cards coming out your ears. Scan them into your contact manager. Corex CardScan Executive even scans cards into your PalmPilot. Attach documents and photos of your contacts in contact managers like Multiactive Maximizer 5.0 or Microsoft Outlook 98.

Corex CardScan Executive / (877) 227-3722 / $70 est. street price / *Enter 675 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Microsoft Outlook 98 / (800) 426-9400 / $109 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 676*

Multiactive Software Maximizer 5.0 / (800) 804-6299 / $149 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 677*

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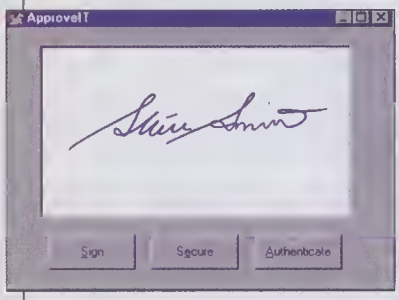


Want to make e-mail and electronic documents official? Save time and stop wasting paper? Give 'em your digital John Hancock by scanning your signature and affixing it to any document that needs your approval or just a personal touch. Signature software like Silanis Technology's ApproveIt for Office lets you encrypt and password-protect your signature. Once installed, ApproveIt can be accessed from a pull-down menu in Microsoft Word, or you can use it in PDF files.

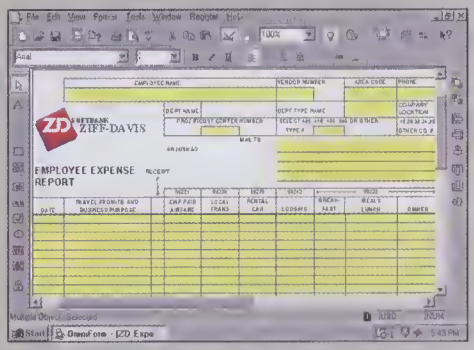
Silanis Technology ApproveIt for Office / (888) 745-2647 / $149 est. street price / *Enter 674 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

GOOD FORM

Filling out forms is as unavoidable as death and taxes, not to mention deathly boring. But a scanner makes the process a little easier. With Caere OmniForm 3.0, scan your forms and make them electronic. Spell-check the forms too, and add shortcuts like autofill. OmniForm Filler 3.0 lets you and others fill out those forms online. Submit the forms via e-mail and save yourself a wait in line, or at least a postage stamp.

Caere OmniForm 3.0 / (800) 654-1187 / $149 est. street price / *Enter 678 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Caere OmniForm Filler 3.0 / (800) 654-1187 / $79 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 679*



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The 1.4 megapixel Olympus D-600L is the perfect home and office digital camera for capturing memorable moments in time. And now's the perfect time to buy one.

Winner of more awards than any other digital camera in its class, the D-600L features a superior, all-glass Olympus lens system. With easy-to-use professional-level features right at your fingertips.

The D-600L is also floppy disk compatible with the optional FlashPath™ Adapter. And it connects directly to the Olympus P-300 Personal Photo Printer — with or without a computer — to produce beautiful, photo-quality prints in about two minutes.

So see your Olympus retailer today. Because even though we can't put a price on great memories, we can put a price on a great digital camera — the D-600L. Only $899.

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Focus On Life

www.olympus.com/digital

Infolink 109 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Picture shown is an unretouched photograph taken with the Olympus D-600L digital camera.

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LEXAR Media™

www.digitalfilm.com

Lexar digital film records photos faster than any other film card – up to 300% faster (and yes we can prove it in one of those silly charts).

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It's what makes digital cameras GO.

Just like the film you need for a 35mm camera, digital cameras require "digital film" to save and store pictures. But not all digital film is created equal. Lexar is the only digital film that delivers a high octane boost to your digital camera. That means when it's "Loaded with Lexar™," you have the speed and power to catch all the action.

Lexar Media has been tested in virtually every digital camera on the market including: • Agfa • Canon • Casio • Epson • Fuji • Hewlett Packard • Kodak • Konica • Minolta • Mitsubishi • Nikon • Olympus • Panasonic • Polaroid • Ricoh • Samsung • Sanyo • Toshiba • Vivitar • Yashica

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Infolink 295 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME

Keep an eye on your business by turning a desktop digital camera into a security watchdog. Use your digital camera or set up a simple eyeball camera like the Logitech Color QuickCam Pro to take digital video or snapshots of your workplace. Pair the QuickCam with software like Syncronys EyeCatcher, which records, e-mails, or faxes the images or sounds an alarm to alert you to intruders. If you want real peace of mind, get a full-blown security system like Bakson PC Patrol that combines the digital camera monitoring system with motion sensors and alarms.

Bakson PC Patrol / (888) 225-7680 / $395 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 680*

Logitech Color QuickCam Pro / (800) 231-7717 / $129 est. street price / *Enter 681 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Syncronys EyeCatcher / (888) 999-3800 / $50 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 682*

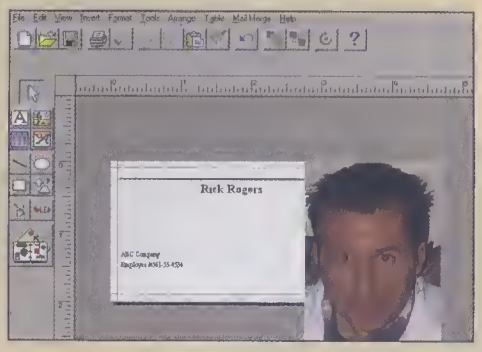
POSITIVE ID

Want to keep track of your employees or customers? Use digital photos to create fast, inexpensive photo identification cards. They're simple to make, and they work great for secure workplaces as well as for membership-based businesses like video stores or health clubs. Take the digital photos and drop them onto an ID-card template made with a desktop-publishing program like Microsoft Publisher 98 or Broderbund Print Shop. If there's not already an ID-card template, create your own. You can also drop in a scanned logo and any information you like. Use a bar-coding program like Zebra Technologies Barcode Anything System 3.0 to encode and track the cards, and voilà—you have your own photo-ID tracking system. If a cardholder loses his or her ID or accidentally runs it through the washing machine, just whip up another one in minutes.

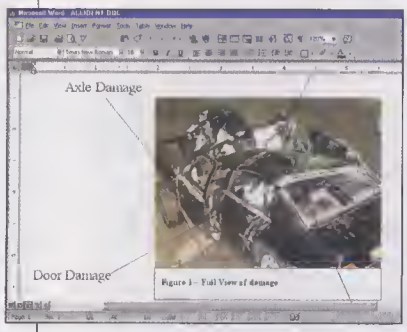
Broderbund Print Shop / (800) 548-1798 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 685 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Microsoft Publisher 98 / (800) 426-9400 / $99 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 686*

Zebra Technologies Barcode Anything System 3.0 / (800) 477-5589 / $299 list price / *InfoLink No. 687*



STAKE YOUR CLAIM



Car accidents and natural disasters are hard enough on victims without the pain of dealing with a disorganized, bureaucratic insurance agency. Digital imaging speeds up claims. Insurance companies can use digital photos and documents to get those claims filed fast. With a digital camera you can show before and after photos of property damage. Drop the photos into your word processor and use annotation tools to highlight damage details. Scan in claim forms, eyewitness accounts, accident reports, and other vital documents to attach to a claim.

HOME SWEET HOME

In the real estate business, the right organizational skills, tools, and savvy can make or break a sale. And the smartest tools for selling houses are digital. Real estate agencies are a natural home for digital cameras and scanners. Take photographs of properties and create a thumbnail database. With document-management software like Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe, scan and attach prices, important escrow documents, and contact information on buyers and sellers. And with desktop-publishing tools like Adobe PageMaker 6.5, create professional-looking flyers, glossy brochures, and newsletters. PictureWorks Technology even has a real estate–specific Photo Marketing Toolkit that lets you drop digital photos into flyers and postcards for dream-house seekers, or even create e-postcards with voice annotation.

Adobe PageMaker 6.5 / (800) 422-3623 / $895 list price / *InfoLink No. 683*

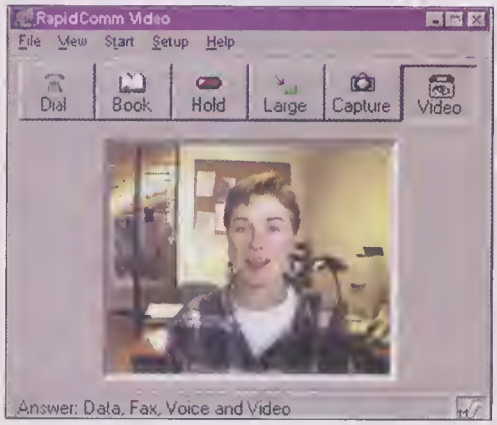
PictureWorks Photo Marketing Toolkit / (800) 303-5400 / $200 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 684*

Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe / (800) 787-7007 / $79 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 673*

E-Commerce

Digital images help you save money around the office, but they also help you make money online. Digital photos and documents are key e-commerce tools and great ways to get customers to visit your Web site. Here are a few ways to turn those digital images to dollars.

CANDID CAMERA



Give your customers a slice of life at your office—install a Web cam. Have a digital camera take photos or video of your office at regular intervals and post the images straight to the Web so customers can see what you do all day. If you're ready for a little more two-way interaction, let your customers videoconference with you using cameras and communication software like 3Com Bigpicture video phone. Just make sure you brush your hair—you want to give viewers a slice of life, not a horror movie.

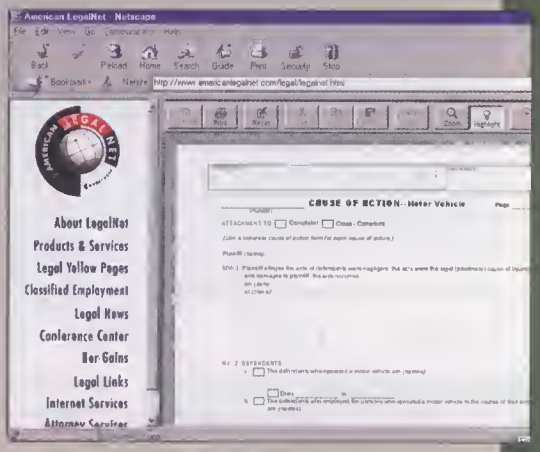
3Com Bigpicture video phone / (800) 342-5877 / $160 list price / *InfoLink No. 688*

MUG SHOTS

If you want to get personal with your online customers but not that personal, post staff photos and bios online. Products like NetStudio's NetStudio 1.0 make it easy to get a Web page up and running quickly. Dedicate a few special pages of the Web site to fun stuff—company events and the like. It's a small gesture, but one that makes people come back to your site.

NetStudio NetStudio 1.0 / (510) 644-9700 / $149 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 689*

FULL SERVICE



Don't just display pretty digital pictures on your Web site—give your customers something they can use. Offering important documents online is a fast, low-tech way to guarantee site visits and make things easy for your customers. If you use special forms or owner's manuals for your business, take a hint from the Internal Revenue Service and offer them online for downloading. Use Adobe Acrobat 3.0 and turn them into PDF files—visitors just download them from your site with the free Acrobat Reader and print them. If you want to do the IRS one better, use Caere OmniForm Internet Publisher to make your business forms live online. Site visitors fill them out and submit them, and OmniForm Internet Publisher's back-end server processes the forms for speedy service. It's not only more convenient for customers and efficient for you, it's good for the environment too. Every electronic form used is another tree spared.

Adobe Acrobat 3.0 / (800) 422-3623 / $295 list price / *Enter 690 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Adobe Acrobat Reader / (800) 422-3623 / Free / *InfoLink No. 691*

Caere OmniForm Internet Publisher / (800) 654-1187 / $899 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 692*

One has a history of awards. The other is making history.

The NEW Lexmark 3200 Color Jetprinter.™ The first in its class with 1200 x 1200 dpi.

The AWARD-WINNING Lexmark 5700 Color Jetprinter™

How do you know you're looking at the best color inkjet printer? Why not ask the experts? The Lexmark 5700 is *PC World's* Best Buy, *Home Office Computing's* Best Buy and a *Windows Magazine* Win100 winner. And no wonder. The 5700's image resolution is the highest in the industry with 1200 x 1200 dpi. It prints at a quick 8 pages per minute, has the advanced Accu-Feed™ system which virtually eliminates jams, and right now, it's being offered with a $50 rebate.

And if you think that's impressive, the 3200 is making history by offering the same industry-leading 1200 x 1200 dpi image quality as the 5700–now for only $149 after rebate. Call 1-800-LEXMARK for a dealer near you. Or visit our website at www.lexmark.com. *The proof is in the printing.*

LEXMARK™

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Infolink 123 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

"We led the league in home runs, stolen bases and R.B.I.s.
But it was our UMAX scanner that made us famous."

Little-league baseball cards. Personal Web sites. Emails with photos. Just a few of the things you can do with a UMAX scanner.

**ASTRA 1220 SERIES.
Make it into the big leagues
for under $200.**

The process is simple: scan your photo with a UMAX Astra 1220 scanner, add your favorite artwork, and print. Suddenly, the scouts are calling. And you've never looked better. That's because Astra 1220 scanners boast true 600 x 1200 dpi optical resolution and 36-bit color quality. Which means you'll see things other scanners can't show. Like the exquisite shades of pine tar on your bat. Every colorful stitch on your team jersey. Heck, you'll even see the hotdog guy in the background. And since Astra 1220 scanners cost under $200, they win M.V.P. honors for quality and value. Our scanner line-up supports both PC and Mac platforms, and with Parallel, SCSI, or USB interfaces, there's a model that's compatible with your computer. They also come with easy to use imaging software, including Adobe PhotoDeluxe.™ So, if you're ready to be famous, pick up an Astra 1220 scanner at your nearest computer retail store. Or for more information, check out www.umax.com/ball or call 1.888.358.UMAX. After all, your career may depend on it.

UMAX ASTRA 1220

COMPARISON	Astra 1220	HP 6200C
Optical Resolution	600x1200 dpi	600 dpi
Color Quality	36-bit	36-bit
Price	$129-$179	$399

*According to InfoTrends, IDC and PCData, 1998. ©1998 UMAX Technologies, Inc. All rights reserved. UMAX is a registered trademark of UMAX Technologies, Inc. All other brands and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. Prices listed are estimated street price and may be subject to change.

UMAX. Number one in U.S. scanner sales.*

UMAX®

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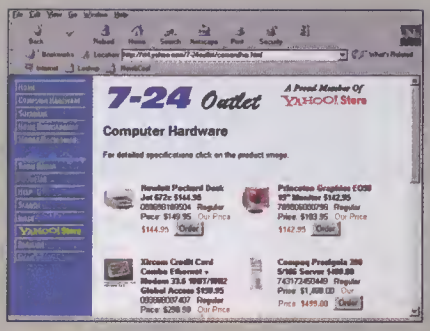
SHOW AND TELL



Then there's the meat of online commerce—actually selling items from your Web site. Most folks aren't going to buy products they can't see, so give them a peek at what you're selling with digital images. Photos of your merchandise tantalize buyers, and you can link the pictures to more product information. Also link images to a shopping cart program like WebGenie Shopping Cart or to an offsite e-commerce service like Yahoo Store. After all, when it comes to buying online, looks are everything. So let your customers check out the merchandise.

Yahoo Store / store.yahoo.com/ad.html / $100 per month / *InfoLink No. 693*

WebGenie Shopping Cart / www.webgenie.com / $295 Basic, $495 Professional, est. street prices / *Enter 694 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

MOST IMPROVED

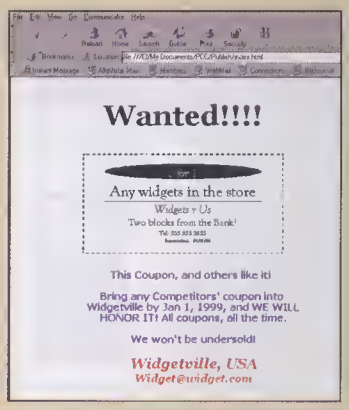
Go ahead, promote yourself online using digital imaging. Nothing's more persuasive than results when you're selling a service, and the Web is a great place to show off what you can do. If you own a fix-it business like an auto body shop or an interior design company, give your potential customers visual proof that you do your job well. Post before and after photos on your Web site from previous clients you've helped. Take the photos with your digital camera or scan them. For any business, scan thank-you notes and testimonials from satisfied customers. It's easy to post them to your site using a good Web page editor like Microsoft FrontPage 98 or Macromedia Dreamweaver.

Microsoft FrontPage 98 / (800) 426-9400 / $149 est. street price / *Enter 697 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Macromedia Dreamweaver / (800) 470-7211 / $299 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 698*

WINNERS' CIRCLE

Digital imaging helps you provide online customer incentives, too. Sponsor contests on your site in which you post the winner's photo or prizewinning entry online. Scan copies of your coupons for customers to download from your site and print. Offer to accept competitors' coupons; scan and post them so people can see what's available.

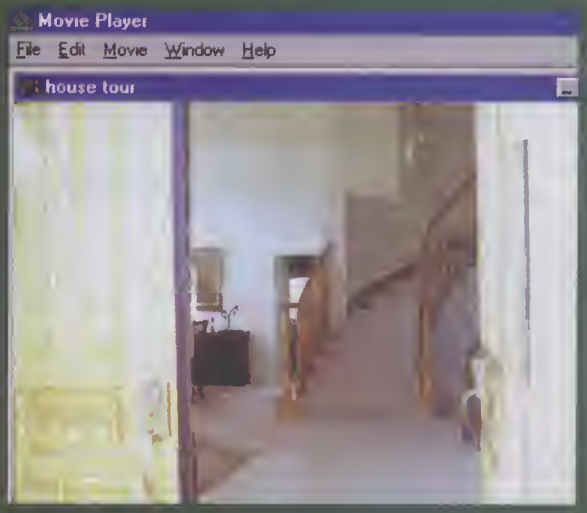


GRAND TOUR

You can't let online customers actually kick the tires or try things on, but you can use digital photos to provide more than a two-dimensional peek at Web merchandise. If you're selling homes online, don't just show the front of each house—let visitors tour the grounds. With PictureWorks Spin Panorama 2.0 stitch software, connect several digital photos for a 360-degree QuickTime VR view of a neighborhood or a few rooms in a house. For things, not spaces, go with PictureWorks' Spin PhotoObject, which turns several digital photos of anything you're selling—from cars to clothes—into 3-D objects. You can make PhotoObject 3-D models into QuickTime VR objects or even animated GIFs. If you have an instructional Web site, create photo animations to vividly illustrate your lessons.

PictureWorks Spin Panorama 2.0 / (800) 303-5400 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 695 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

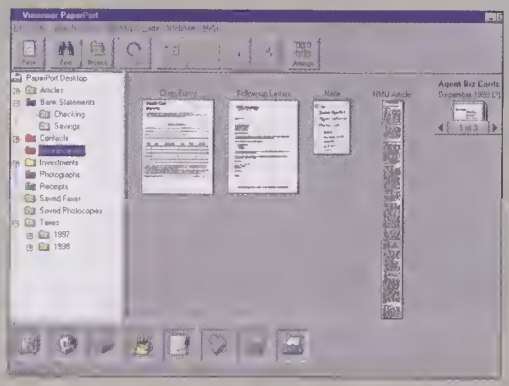
PictureWorks Spin PhotoObject / (800) 303-5400 / $50 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 696*



SOHO Smarts

Digital images are great for the office, but what if you have a really small office? A camera or a scanner helps a SOHO business save money and look as good as the big boys. And if your home is your office, these digital tools help keep your house shipshape too.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION



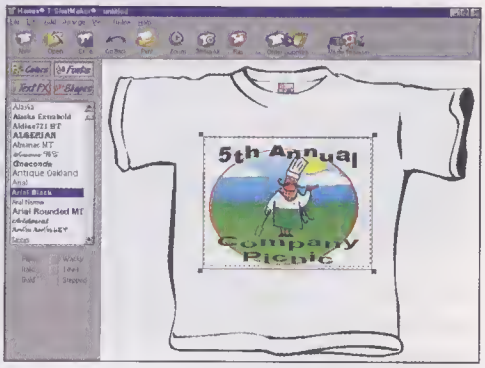
Don't leave home without it—your vital information, that is. With a scanner you can keep crucial records with you at all times in case of emergency. Scan birth certificates, marriage licenses, passports, and medical records onto your PC with a good document-management system like Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe. Then transfer the vital information you need onto a floppy disk to carry with you when you travel. That way, if you run into trouble on a business trip and need to show who you are or what medical treatment you need, you can pop the disk into any PC and access vital information right away. And if you lose the real documents to home damage or burglary, no problem—you have backup copies.

Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe / (800) 787-7007 / $79 est. street price / *Enter 673 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

FIT TO A TEE

There's no better way to promote your company than with T-shirts. Don't let the big corporations have all the fun just because your marketing budget is minuscule. Can't afford to have T-shirts made for the company picnic? Create your own! Hanes T-ShirtMaker 2.0 gives you designs, iron-on transfer paper, and a photo-editing tool to put your images and logos onto T-shirts. You'll be surprised how easy it is.

Hanes T-ShirtMaker 2.0 / (800) 426-3728 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 700 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

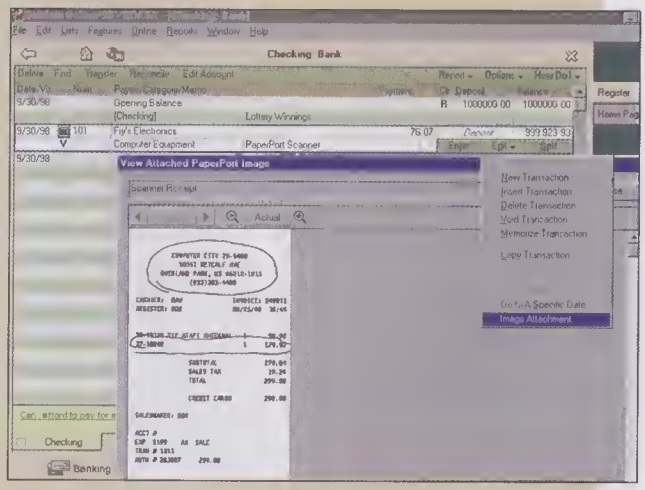


QUICK RECEIPTS

Still hiding money under your mattress? Bouncing checks left and right? Forgetting to pay bills? Intuit Quicken Deluxe 99 is a great way to keep your finances in order no matter how hopeless it seems. You can go one step further with a scanner and Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe. It works with Quicken to let you scan in receipts and attach them to individual entries in your financial register. You can also attach receipts to expense reports or keep them for your tax records—if you don't use Quicken, any document-management program will do. Get rid of those little scraps of paper in shoeboxes, briefcases, and pockets, and never lose a receipt again.

Intuit Quicken Deluxe 99 / (800) 446-8848 / $60 est. street price / *Enter 699 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe / (800) 787-7007 / $79 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 673*



New SurgeStation™: The Most Advanced Features Ever Designed By Our Customers

"I want to plug a telephone line and a modem dataline into the same surge protector."

"I need more outlets for peripherals."

"I need some outlets that are always on."

"I want to plug in transformer blocks and keep all outlets open."

Order Today!

The Challenge

Surge suppression is vital to the health of your electronic equipment. The SurgeStation™, APC's latest offering, accepts the challenge issued by APC customers to incorporate several "dream features" while maintaining the key elements and high-performance that make SurgeArrest® one of the best selling surge suppressors in the world.

Not all surge protectors are alike

Life presents many risks, most people seek out the best insurance to reduce the threat of these risks, so why would you trust the protection of your PC to some outlet strip? APC is the world leader in power protection; we provide you with premium, reliable surge protection, and the peace of mind that comes from knowing you have the best protection.

All the Features You Wanted

SurgeStation products now include: Eight outlets – three spaced to handle transformer blocks easily, a new building wiring-fault indicator, a right-angle plug to maximize your work space, and a switch large enough to be pressed on with your foot, but recessed enough to prevent accidental turn-off.

Whether you need basic protection, or the best protection money can buy, APC has a SurgeStation to meet your needs. Each SurgeStation model offers the best protection from lightning strikes and everyday power surges that can cause hardware damage and data loss. Every model carries a lifetime equipment protection policy; if connected equipment is ever damaged by a surge or lightning strike, APC will replace up to $25,000* worth of that equipment. With power problems virtually guaranteed to damage unprotected electronics, you won't find a better protection value.

SurgeStation also comes in models with built-in telephone and built-in cable and telephone protection.

Building/Site Wiring Fault Indicator

SurgeStation is equipped with a Building/Site Wiring Fault LED that identifies dangerous wiring problems before you plug in your equipment.

Protection Working Indicator

*A Protection Working LED warns you if SurgeStation circuitry is ever damaged. APC will then replace the damaged SurgeStation for free under its lifetime warranty.**

Right-angle Plug

SurgeStation's space-saving plug design allows the cord to be flat against the wall.

8 Outlet Floor Models

Eight outlets on SurgeStation floor models provide ample space for equipment plugs with transformer blocks.

For Home Office/Small Office Applications

The SurgeStation series offers premium protection for small business/home office computers, high-performance stereo and video equipment, laser printers, and modems.

So join the over 8,000,000 satisfied computer users who say "ProtectME!" with APC.

Lifetime Equipment Protection Policy

*With the Lifetime Equipment Protection policy, your equipment connected to SurgeStation is protected. (*See policy for details.)*

FREE! Guide to Buying Surge Protection

Just mail or fax this completed coupon for your FREE Guide to Surge Protection. Better yet, order it today at:

http://promo.apcc.com KEY CODE h987z

☐ YES! Send my FREE Surge Protection Buying Guide.

☐ NO, I'm not interested at this time, but please add me to your quarterly newsletter mailing list.

Name: _____

Title: _____ Company: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Country _____

Phone: _____

Brand of UPS used? _____ # _____

Brand of PCs used? _____ # _____

Are you familiar with UPSs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

American Power Conversion

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SurgeArrest SurgeStation Pro8T2

- Transformer block spacing
- Built-in 2 Telephone line (4 wire) surge protection
- Up to $10,000 Equipment Protection Policy
- Only $39.95

Order Now by calling:

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Ask for item number 45249. For more information, visit our Web site at http://promo.apcc.com or simply fill out the attached form.

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APC has won more awards for reliability than all other UPS vendors combined.

WIN 100 MAGAZINE 1997 • PC World 20 Best Upgrades • Computer Approved • PC Editors' Choice

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inventory

www.pandesic.com/info/inventory

Yeah, your Web site's working great. It's still taking orders for a product you've been out of for weeks.

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how a business does ebusiness

To take real advantage of the Web's potential, you need to be sure your site is more than just another "order taker." It needs to be a fully integrated fulfillment machine. And now with the Pandesic™ internet business solution, it can be. A unique combination of software, hardware and services, the Pandesic solution automates everything from billing and accounting to shipping and fulfillment—even inventory management and financial reporting. So you always know the status of an order. And your site will never take an order for something you don't have. For a free video explaining how Pandesic works, just call 1-888-349-ebiz, ext. 201. Your site will never come up short again.

pandesic™
The Internet Company from Intel and SAP

For a free video on Pandesic's e-business solution, call 1-888-349-3249, ext. 201.

Infolink 133 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

TWO (OR THREE) IN ONE

Your home office needs a scanner, a copier, and a fax machine (or some combination of the three). Unfortunately, either you're strapped for space or you can't afford to shell out the big bucks for a multifunction device. Don't worry, as long as you have the scanner, you can have all three without buying another piece of hardware. For faxing, just scan documents into your computer and fax them using your fax modem and software like Symantec WinFax Pro. For copying, most scanners have a utility that lets you make color and black-and-white copies directly from your scanner with the help of a printer. Scanners like Visioneer's PaperPort OneTouch and Storm Technology's TotalScan Express have buttons to automatically launch not only scans, but fax and copy utilities too. There's even an extra button you can program to launch your other apps. It's like having your own MFD. Lumina's Personal Color Copier lets you make copies without using your computer at all. Just attach a printer and copy away. Get a full-service office assistant for the price of a scanner—what are you waiting for?

Lumina Personal Color Copier / (800) 600-8086 / $249 est. street price / *Enter 701 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Storm Technology TotalScan Express / (888) 438-3279 / $249 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 702*

Symantec WinFax Pro / (800) 441-7234 / $100 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 703*

Visioneer PaperPort OneTouch / (800) 787-7007 / $170 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 704*

CHECK IT OUT

You have to do research at the library, but you can't check out the materials because they're permanent resources or you have too many overdue books. Just take what you need—and we're not suggesting vandalism or theft. With a digital camera, a hand scanner, or a capture device like Hewlett-Packard's CapShare 910 Information Appliance, you can digitize what you want and view it anytime on your PC. Because of small file formats the images may require a little stitching, but the CapShare includes software to do this too; or try Enroute Imaging's QuickStitch.

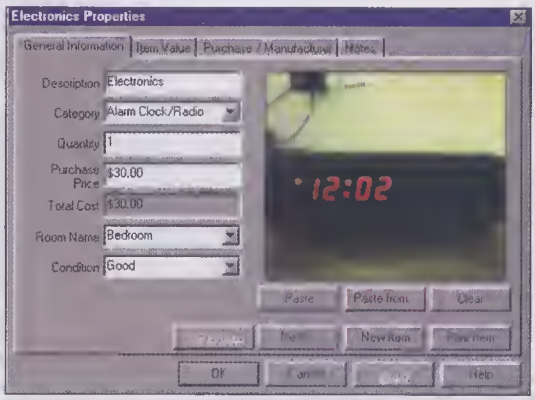
Enroute Imaging QuickStitch / (800) 946-0135 / $40 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 708*

Hewlett-Packard CapShare 910 Information Appliance / (877) 473-6772 / $699 est. street price

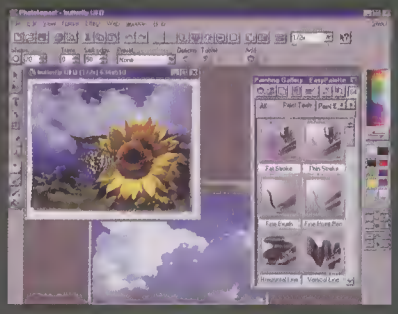
FOR THE RECORD

It's a good idea to have an inventory of furniture and valuables in your home in case of theft or property damage. It's a better idea to have a thumbnail gallery showing pictures of these items. With a home inventory program like Kaetron Software Personal Inventory 98, you can scan or take digital photos of your household treasures, add keywords to organize them into categories, and even scan receipts and purchase records for insurance companies. Be sure to keep a backup copy of the photo database on disk in case the unthinkable happens and your computer disappears too. It's better to be safe than sorry, and you're safest when you have all your valuables thoroughly documented.

Kaetron Software Personal Inventory 98 / (800) 938-8900 / $30 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 709*



WEB MAKEOVER



If you're running a Web page from your home office, you're most likely the designer, Webmaster, and business client all at once. That doesn't mean you can't have a Web site as spiffy as the ones from big companies. Digital or scanned photos are easy to drop onto Web pages to make any site look more stylish. Touch them up first with a personal photo editor like Ulead PhotoImpact 4.2 or even a Web production product like Macromedia Fireworks or Adobe ImageReady. With digital photo pizzazz your Web site will make people take notice.

Adobe ImageReady / (800) 492-3623 / $299 list price / *InfoLink No. 705*

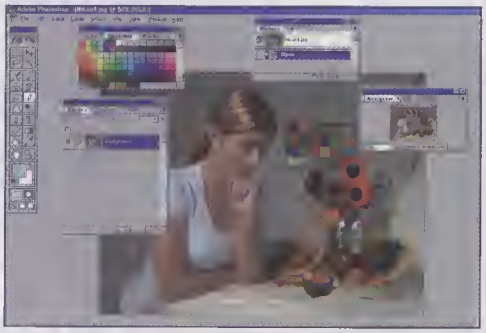
Macromedia Fireworks / (800) 457-1774 / $299 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 706*

Ulead PhotoImpact 4.2 / (800) 858-5323 / $139 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 707*

Design Like a Pro

Nothing makes business documents look slicker and more impressive than color photos and logos. And you don't have to put yourself at the mercy of a professional graphics firm to get the right look. With digital photos and the right scanner, you can take all the credit for eye-popping designs.

PHOTO FINISH



If you want to perk up your digital photos by removing red-eye and adjusting brightness, any personal photo editor will do the trick. But if you want to polish every pixel and really make your photos flawless, there's only one way to go—Adobe Photoshop 5.0. Photoshop is the tool the pros use to turn out perfect pictures every time. It's more expensive and a little harder to learn than your average consumer product, but if image is everything, Photoshop is worth the trouble. And now it's easier than ever to get your digital photos into Photoshop—ixla's Digital Camera Direct Plug-in adds a Digital Camera option to Photoshop's Import feature. The plug-in displays your camera's images as thumbnails within Photoshop and makes downloading them a snap.

Adobe Photoshop 5.0 / (800) 492-3623 / $649 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 710*

ixla Digital Camera Direct Plug-in / www.ixla.com / $50 est. street price / *Enter 711 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

HERE'S MY CARD

In business? You need business cards and knock-'em-dead professional letterhead. But don't pay a print shop to design and produce your office stationery—do it yourself. Intuitive programs like Microsoft Publisher 98 let you create your own business cards, letterhead, flyers, and newsletters by dropping in logos and digital photos. You save a bundle on production costs alone, and you have total artistic control. For a personal twist, add digital photos to your business cards. Then print the results on an ink jet like Epson's Stylus Color 740. It's affordable enough for any office, and you won't believe how professional the output looks. For truly great results, check out DogByte Development's Business Card, Ink & More. It includes 1,400 predesigned layouts, 1,000 clip-art images, and 500 logos you won't see just anywhere, as well as business card stock and letterhead. In no time at all you'll be looking good for less.

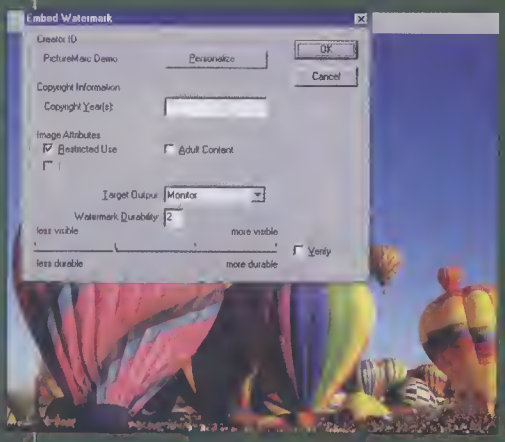
DogByte Development Business Card, Ink & More / (800) 936-4298 / $20 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 713*

Epson Stylus Color 740 / (800) 463-7766 / $279 est. street price

Microsoft Publisher 98 / (800) 426-9400 / $99 est. street price / *Enter 685 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

ALL YOURS

You've taken a great shot, edited it to digital perfection, and displayed it on the Web for all to see. Don't stop there. Protect it with Digimarc's digital watermarking utility, available in Photoshop or as a stand-alone product. Digimarc software embeds information into your images for attribution. It also provides contact info in case someone wants to track you down and offer you more work.



Digimarc Batch Embedder / (800) 344-4627 / $79 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 712*

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How to scan and e-mail a photo from their scanner.

How to do it from ours.

One small step for scanners. 13 fewer steps for you.

Let's face it, most scanners are not as simple as they are supposed to be.

Drag and drop, plug and play, billions of colors, and all the other terms and specs don't make a bit of difference when all you want to do is e-mail a photo, scan a page of text into your word-processor or any of the other tasks you do countless times a day.

PaperPort OneTouch offers a simpler, more elegant solution. It does most of the work for you, thanks to tight integration with our PaperPort software.

Drop in your original. Push a button. It's that easy. Hold down a button, change a few settings, and your scanner is practically a whole new machine.

Sure, we have all the specs and features you expect in a quality scanner. But we think you'll be much more impressed with those five friendly buttons up front.

PaperPort OneTouch.
All scanners should be this simple.

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36-bit color (internal)
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• Printer port pass-through design • Lift-off lid • Includes PaperPort software
• Windows 95/98/NT 4.0 compatible

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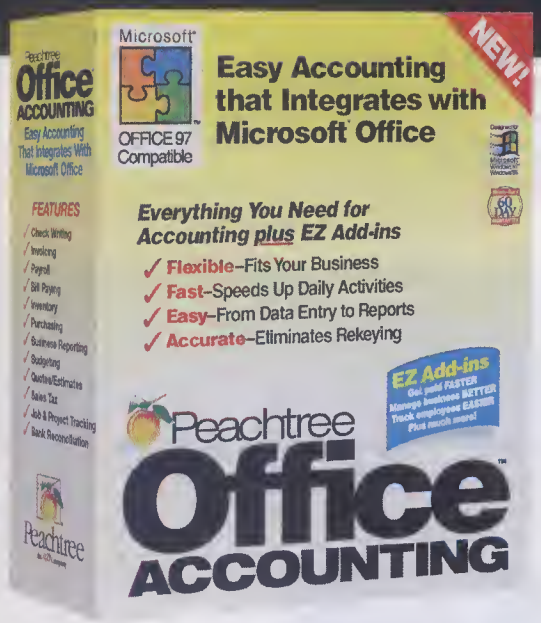
*Estimated U.S. street price after $30 mail-in rebate. Rebate valid in the U.S. and Canada at participating resellers. © 1998 Visioneer, Inc.

Infolink 242 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

See below.

See above.



A Demonstration of How Easy It Is to Move Data Back & Forth Between Peachtree Office™ Accounting & Microsoft® Office.

Introducing easy accounting software that completely integrates with Microsoft Office.

Check out Peachtree Office Accounting and you'll recognize its familiar look and feel — you might even think it was designed by Microsoft. Its seamless integration with Microsoft Office lets you transfer accounting data into Microsoft Excel or Word, use it and bring it back. Now you can finally use your accounting data for more than just accounting.

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To find out more, visit us at www.peachtree.com/office

or call 800-851-2875

Infolink 150 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

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3. Include a separate sheet of paper with your name, company name, phone number, serial number and address.

Purchases must be made by Jan. 31, 1999 and sent to the address below:

Peachtree Software • P.O. Box 15807, Dept. 15555 • Scottsdale, AZ 85267-5807

ARTIST'S TOUCH

Digital photos are fine as is, but maybe you want to give them the classic look of a brush painting. Microsoft Picture It 99 has a special Paint effect that lets you turn any digital photo into an Impressionist work of art. Professor Franklin's Instant Photo Artist from Streetwise Software has several different styles, including Charcoal, Oil, and Spray Painting. And if futuristic or funky is more your game, MetaCreations Painter Classic lets you add wild effects like liquid metal or fire to photos.

MetaCreations Painter Classic / (800) 846-0111 / $99 est. street price / *Enter 714 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Microsoft Graphics Studio Picture It 99 / (800) 426-9400 / $49 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 715*

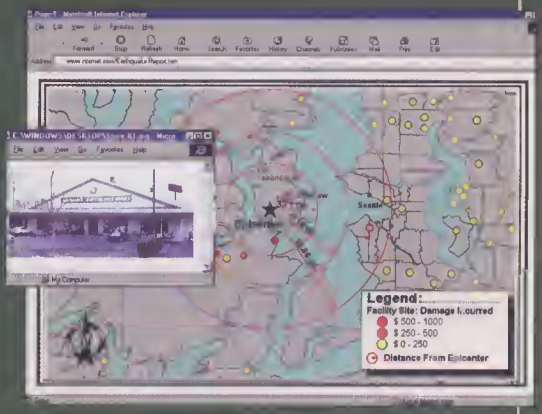
Streetwise Software Professor Franklin's Instant Photo Artist / (800) 743-6765 / $40 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 716*

YOU ARE HERE

If you want to give printed directions to your friends, why not include a map? Scan one in and send it off via e-mail or snail mail. Better yet, stick it on a Web site. Most maps get you where you want to go, but it would be nice to see what else is there. Why not create an interactive map with digital photos of landmarks along the way? Visio Maps, an add-on for any Visio 5.0–based product, lets you create geographic maps, add links to documents, photos, or Web pages, then save the maps as HTML pages with links intact. Think what Christopher Columbus could have done with this technology.

Visio Maps / (800) 248-4746 / $99 est. street price / *Enter 717 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Visio Standard 5.0 / (800) 248-4746 / $149 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 718*



PRESENTATIONS WITH PUNCH

Clients get as tired of watching those same blue PowerPoint presentation slides as you do. If your audience is napping through your presentations, wake things up a bit. Add a little life to your slide shows with some digital eye candy. Of course, it's a cinch to drop digital photos and scanned logos and graphics into PowerPoint slides. But don't stop there—morph photos and graphics into one another for stunning animated effects. MetaCreations Kai's Power Show lets you add animated text, special effects transitions, and sound clips. If you want to get really fancy but not too high-end, go for Macromedia Flash. Flash is the same tool the pros use, but it's easy enough for beginners to learn. You can morph photos, animate logos, and do all kinds of fun tricks, and your results shine both in presentations and on the Web.

Macromedia Flash / (800) 457-1774 / $299 est. street price / *Enter 719 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

MetaCreations Kai's Power Show / (800) 846-0111 / $50 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 720*

Microsoft PowerPoint / (800) 426-9400/ $339 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 721*

Fun Stuff

Why should you have all the fun? Digital images, both at home and on the Web, are something the whole family can enjoy. Keep those photos at your electronic fingertips, make them good as new, and turn them into entertaining projects and household necessities.

SAFE KEEPING

A picture's worth a thousand words, but if the words aren't in order all you have is an unreadable mess. Dumping digital photos on your PC with no rhyme or reason is no better than letting old photos languish in some musty shoe box. Products like Canon Software Publishing's Photo Org and Sony's ImageStation are so hassle-free you'd never guess they have sophisticated databases keeping track of your photos by date, name, and keyword. Look for the image you need with a search feature, or just scout out the right thumbnail shot. These products and others, like MGI PhotoSuite II, also let you organize your photos in electronic albums so you can flip through your favorite memories page by page.

Canon Software Publishing Photo Org / (800) 652-2666 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 722 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

MGI PhotoSuite II / (888) 644-7638 / $50 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 723*

Sony ImageStation / imagestation.sony.com / $19.95 per year / *InfoLink No. 724*

SPECIAL DELIVERY

Goodbye, boring e-mail messages. Send an e-mail postcard with photos attached. With e-postcard utilities like PictureWorks NetCard, Novita LiveLetter, and Broderbund Print Shop LiveMail, you can send photos to anyone with an e-mail account and spice them up with captions, sounds, and animations.

Broderbund Print Shop LiveMail / (617) 761-3000 / $20 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 726*

Novita LiveLetter / (408) 588-1400 / $40 est. street price / *Enter 727 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

PictureWorks NetCard / (800) 303-5400 / $30 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 728*

THIS SPACE FOR RENT

Put those photos online for the rest of the world to see. If you don't have your own Web site, no problem. Just borrow some space from an online photo service. Kodak PhotoNet Online and Sony ImageStation both let you store digital photos online for a low monthly fee. They're available for viewing, ordering reprints, and even for turning into special gift items like mugs.

Kodak PhotoNet Online / (800) 242-2424 / $4.95 per month / *Enter 729 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Sony ImageStation / imagestation.sony.com / $19.95 per year / *InfoLink No. 724*

PERFECT ALBUM PAGES

If you want to put your photos into an old-fashioned photo album, use Sound Vision's Album Builder to create digital album pages you can print. Use it to place, crop, and size your digital images onto any size sheet. Choose from several templates and even add labels and captions. Then print the sheet and slip it into a plastic protector that fits into a three-ring notebook. And if anything ever happens to the album, you have a digital backup.

Sound Vision Album Builder / (508) 270 0027 / $30 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 725*

GOOD AS NEW

Scan grandma's wedding photos or your childhood pics into your PC and make them good as new. MetaCreations Kai's Photo Soap and Microsoft Picture It 99 both have tools to remove scratches and discoloration.

MetaCreations Kai's Photo Soap / (800) 846-0111 / $49 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 730*

Microsoft Graphics Studio Picture It 99 / (800) 426-9400 / $49 est. street price / *Enter 715 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

You

Okay, this is the big one. Now, how are you going to present to the head honchos in New York, the top dogs in Dallas and the big guys in San Francisco all at once? I mean, you've got video files, audio files, flow charts, a white paper... you name it. You've got to put it together into a tight presentation on the Web. And on top of it all you've got fifteen minutes to do it. Our instructions: take a deep breath and...

Blend

(it's that easy)

Finally, there's software that gives you the power to get it all together and post it on the Web. But remember, Yesler Alive™ isn't just for "the big presentation." Its specialty is helping you put it together. Whatever "it" may be. So if you have information that you want to share with others, let Yesler Alive help you blend it together into a hassle-free, stylized, multimedia format. Hey, go ahead and try the future of Web communications for FREE. **www.yesler.com**

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Infolink 375 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

I FEEL PRETTY

Looking a little drab lately? Maybe a drastic hairstyle change or a hip goatee is in order. But are you willing to risk a month of bad hair days if things go horribly wrong? You don't have to. If you have a digital photo of yourself handy, see what you'd look like with a new hair color and style, fuchsia lipstick, or blue eyes—without touching your face or a hair on your head. Fun makeover programs like Mindscape's Cosmopolitan Virtual Makeover and Connectix WigOut let you scan your digital mug and try out a whole new look. Cosmopolitan Virtual Makeover comes with extension packs if you've gone through their hundreds of styles and colors and still can't find the right one.

Connectix WigOut / (800) 950-5880 / $30 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 731*

Mindscape Cosmopolitan Virtual Makeover, The Collection / (888) 734-2763 / $49 est. street price / *Enter 732 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

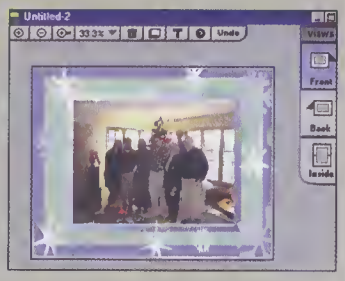
RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY

Your kids can't go outside and they know every Disney video by heart. They're getting restless. Let them get creative with digital photos. LivePix 2.0 Deluxe lets kids picture themselves on magazine covers or Mount Rushmore, or in crazy costumes and wigs. And for some real fun, the Olympus P-300 thermal photo printer comes with a photo sticker option so kids can snap photos and print them out as mini stickers to share.

Live Picture LivePix 2.0 Deluxe / (800) 724-7900 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 733 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Olympus P-300 / (800) 622-6372 / $399 est. street price, $60 for 60 sheets of sticker paper / *InfoLink No. 734*

SEASONS GREETINGS



Forget snoozerrific holiday form letters or canned Christmas cards. Give your relatives a real gift by sending greetings with a personal touch. Packages like Microsoft Home Publishing 99 and Broderbund Print Shop Signature Greetings let you make greeting cards with your own digital images, as well as personalized envelopes to stuff them in. Print store-quality cards on any ink-jet printer, or send them out over the Internet. And if cards aren't your bag, photo editors like Adobe PhotoDeluxe Home Edition 3.0 let you create calendars with a dozen images for all seasons.

Adobe PhotoDeluxe Home Edition 3.0 / (800) 422-3623 / $49 est. street price / *Enter 735 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Broderbund Print Shop Signature Greetings / (617) 761-3000 / $20 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 736*

Microsoft Graphics Studio Home Publishing 99 / (800) 426-9400 / $55 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 737*

DIGITAL FRIDGE ART

Scan your children's creations with a flatbed scanner and preserve them for future generations with programs like Creative Wonders Album Maker. Make these works of art into screen savers, mouse pads, or multimedia scrapbooks that'll be around long after your little ones pack up their crayons.

Creative Wonders Album Maker / (800) 716-8506 / $20 est. street price / *Enter 738 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

SCENIC ROUTE

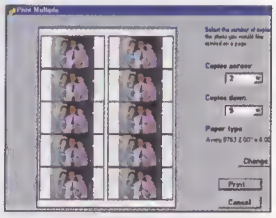
If you like giving family vacation slide presentations but hate your rickety old carousel slide projector, toss it out on the trash heap. Digital cameras like Epson's PhotoPC 700 let you connect directly to a multimedia projector or a television for an instant digital slide show. If you want to pass on the large-group presentation, PhotoRecall Deluxe organizes your photos into a more intimate slide show on your PC with audio narration. And if you really want to wow your audience, Enroute QuickStitch stitches several photos together for a panoramic QuickTime VR view of your favorite scenic spots.

Enroute Imaging QuickStitch / (800) 946-0135 / $40 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 708*

Epson PhotoPC 700 / (800) 463-7766 / $599 est. street price

G&A Imaging PhotoRecall Deluxe 2.0 / (888) 772-7601 / $50 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 739*

IT'S A WRAP



Even if you buy your gifts from the store, you can still give them that personal touch. In a photo editor like Adobe PhotoDeluxe Home Edition 3.0, just tile the digital image of your choice. Then print it out on a good ink-jet printer and use the printed copy as personalized wrapping paper. It's cheaper than regular wrapping paper, and fun too.

Adobe PhotoDeluxe Home Edition 3.0 / (800) 422-3623 / $49 est. street price / *InfoLink No. 735*

Nice life.

Your birth certificate. Your baby pictures. Your adoption records. Your school photos. Your homework. Your award-winning insect report. Your graduation pics. Your scholarship-winning essays. Your senior thesis. Your multimedia resume. Your career-boosting designs. Your love letters. Your wedding announcements. Your prenuptial agreement.

Save it.

programs
WigOut le
Cosmopo
through t
Connecti:
Mindscap
$49 est. st

RA

Your kic
They're
2.0 Del
Rushm
Olympu
so kids
Live Pic
Enter 73
Olympu
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SEA

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form
Chris
relati
greet
touch
Micr
and
Sign
mak
own
stuff
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bag,
let y
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price
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Insure your creations.

You have insurance for your car, your house, even your life. But what about all the important things you create on your personal computer? Saving your files on Iomega® Zip® and Jaz® disks gives you all the insurance you need. After all, while your files are sitting on your PC, they're not safe.

If it's
it's wo

Your wedding album. Your kids' baby pictures. Your client presentations. Your extensive legal documents.

With 70 times more space than a floppy, Zip disks are perfect for work, home, and everything in between. And because there are Zip drives in millions of offices and homes, sharing files is always easy.

Protect against little disasters.

One minute you're staring at your tax records, the next minute, poof! Gone. Zip and Jaz drives can help shield you from the pain of losing important files off your hard drive. Simply copy them onto a Zip or Jaz disk and keep your documents out of harm's way. Because there are a million ways important files can vanish:

Power surges can wipe out entire hard drives.

Kids have been known to delete files, usually by accident. Occasionally "just because."

Computer crashes can freeze up in-progress work.

Some people accidentally delete their files, because they're human.

Internet-based viruses can damage or destroy files.

www.iomega.com for software tools, Norton™ Zip Rescue™ download, new products, and more.

worth doing, orth saving.

Document your life.

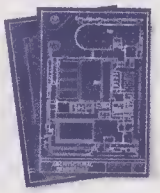
Take your birth certificate, your childhood photos, your wedding video, your artwork, your kids' artwork, or anything else that's a piece of your personal history, and keep it safe on Zip and Jaz disks. It's protection for all the important things you do outside your PC.

Your taxes. Your museum new wing blueprints. Your grandkids' baby pictures. Your city monument site plans. Your retirement portfolio. Your autobiography. Your last will and testament.

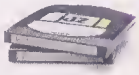
With the new Jaz 2GB drive, you can save your life's biggest, most important work. And it's backward-compatible with the millions of Jaz 1GB disks out there.

Save the day.

Imagine you're working on revision 15 of a presentation. You delete versions 1 through 10 just as the boss says to go back to version 8. Luckily, you saved all 15 versions on a Zip disk. The day is saved.



What if you lost a month's worth of your most important work files? It happens. And careers are damaged by it. Saving your biggest, most important files on Jaz disks can insure your career from taking a turn for the worse.



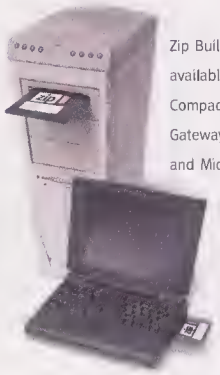
www.iomega.com for software tools, Norton™ Zip Rescue™ download, new products, and more.

Get it.

zip®

The reliable, portable Zip® drive makes an ideal gift for the holidays. And, coincidentally, the colorful 100MB Zip disks are about the width of a stocking. This year, give them Zip.

Zip external drive **$119.95**
Zip internal ATAPI drive **$99.95**



Zip Built-In™ drives available in Apple, Compaq, Dell, Gateway, HP, IBM, and Micron.

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Zip 6-pack **$79.95**
Zip 3-pack **$49.95**

jaz®

What to do with that holiday bonus you gave yourself. How about a Jaz® drive? It's a great way to start saving the new year.

New low price

Jaz 2GB external drive **$349.95**
Jaz 2GB internal drive **$349.95**

It's not just your work. It's your life.

Jaz 2GB single **$124.95**
Jaz 2GB 3-pack **$299.95**

Jaz 1GB single **$99.95**
Jaz 1GB 3-pack **$269.95**

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buz™

It's the easiest way to get your holiday videos onto your PC. Then keep them safe on Zip or Jaz disks.

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Or buy from your favorite computer seller: Best Buy, CDW, CompUSA, MicroWarehouse, Multiple Zones, PC Connection, PC Mall, Office Depot, OfficeMax, Staples.

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PC MAGAZINE *presents*

Face-Off '98

hosted by **Michael J. Miller**

Be there as the top companies in today's hottest technologies go head-to-head in two days of intense competition! Which digital camera performs the best? Who's on the cutting edge in speech recognition software? You vote for the winners in eight sizzling categories!

See for yourself how the products really stack up.

Competition Schedule
Las Vegas Hilton Ballroom A

Tuesday • November 17
2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Portals
Speech Recognition
Web Graphics

Wednesday • November 18
2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
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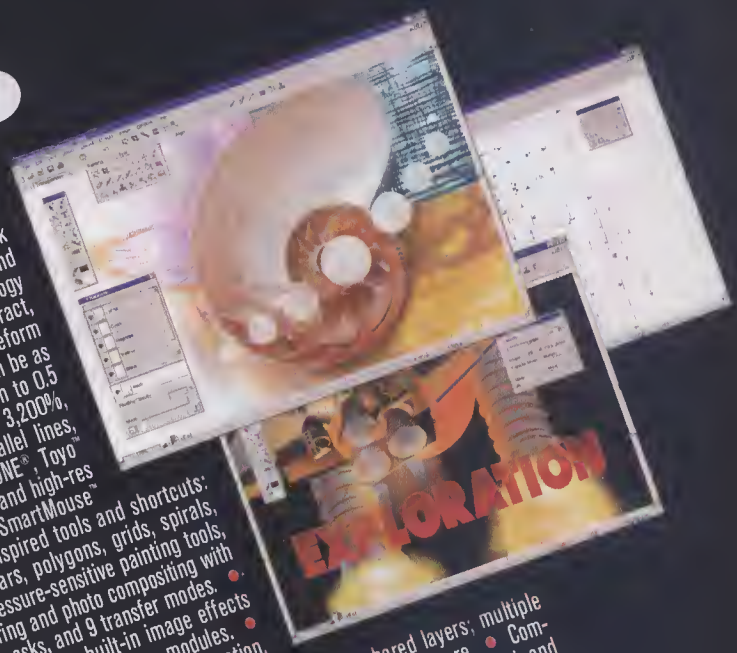

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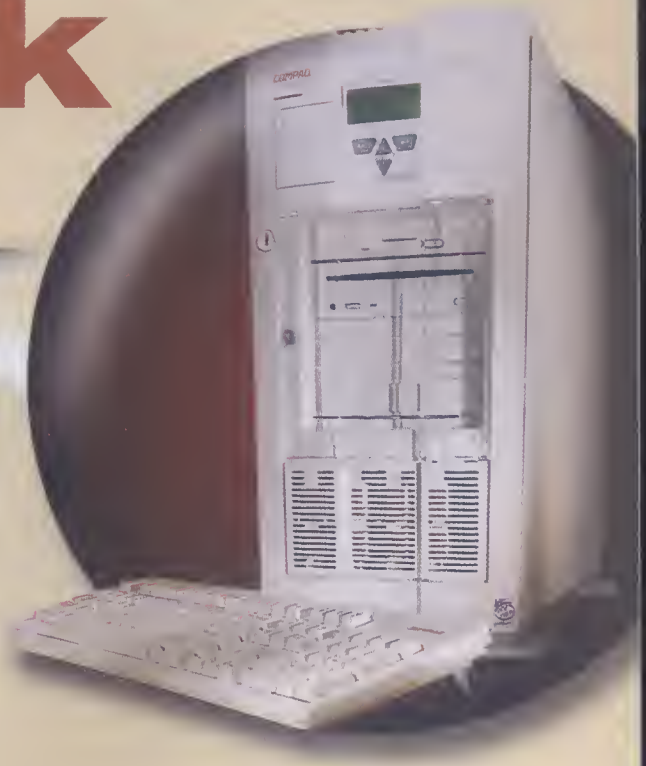


- **400MHz dual-CPU Pentium IIs scream as file, application, and Web servers.**
- **Cost as little as $6,900—yet save as much as $12,000 every year.**
- **At least four RAID-5 hard drives—room to grow.**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNOLD TIOSEJO

Any server can talk the talk. But before you plunk down for one, can it walk the walk? Performance and expandability are only two measures of this promenade. For workgroups, you've also got to deal with costs: tight budgets that allow no room for bad hunches about how your network will grow. *PC Computing* put seven small-office and workgroup powerhouses through the paces.

All were 400MHz dual-CPU Pentium IIs. Each test system came stocked with 512MB of RAM, a minimum of four RAID-5 hard drives, a CD-ROM drive, and two 10/100Mbps Ethernet cards. In other words, they arrived as perfect small-office grunts for file, application, and Web serving. (For more on what a fast cache and four CPUs give you, see our review of the Dell PowerEdge 6300, "Xeon Takes Servers by Storm," November, page 90.)

But it wasn't enough just to test our recruits across

BY MARTY JEROME

these chores using a static number of clients. To really see them in their walking shoes, we scaled up our network from 1 to 60 workstations—typical of a small but growing company—adding them in increments of 4 nodes at a shot. We performance-tested them each step of the way. Then we put them through the unruly rigors of our usability testing, just as you've come to expect.

Client Pleasing Our Performance Labs results give you a view from the administrator's high-salaried chair as well as a clear look at what real users can expect. After all, the clerk who pushes two-paragraph e-mail messages across the network all day makes very different demands—and entertains wildly different expectations about network performance—than the Web wizard who tirelessly summons big, hairy database applications to the fore.

That's where our configuration comes in. The dual 400MHz Pentium II chips and 512MB of RAM provide abundant processing power and bandwidth for trafficking even the heaviest file loads as well as for churning big-fisted apps. And they provide plenty of zip for the Web—even for big wads of dynamic content, the kind that chokes lesser machines. If our results sent up any warning at all, it's to make sure your drive controller is stoked with plenty of cache. Under heavy loads, the servers in our tests with less than 16MB floundered.

Of course, that's easy for *us* to say. Cache is expensive. And workgroup servers tend to invite more budgetary skepticism than opulent enterprise boxes, for which, as is so often the case, no expense is spared. But the single biggest mistake many small companies make is to go cheap on small networks. Inevitably, these purchase decisions come back to bite them. Yes, you can spend less than $2,500 for a server today. But we recommend you have triple that amount in your personal bank account to tide you over until you find your next job.

The most confounding fact of budgeting for a server is that the CPU itself is just a cover charge (see "Beyond the Box," page 285). There are myriad ways to control costs, however. Most workgroups can easily get by with 10Mbps hubs, though more expensive 10/100Mbps Ethernet cards don't require further investment when it's time to upgrade the network. The price premium for 400MHz Pentium II systems over comparable 333MHz boxes is steep, but so is the performance payoff—especially in serving up the Web. And in this day and age, only skinflints underbudget their storage needs.

Dancing for Dollars No matter how you look at it, server budgets are superficial exercises if you fail to take into consideration your total return on investment (ROI). To be sure, it's a slippery issue for businesses large and small. But these days it has become an urgent and absolutely necessary one. For this reason, we did some number crunching of our own to see how soon a server upgrade pays for itself in terms of productivity. Would you believe upgrading to a dual-CPU Pentium II server could net your business as much as $12,000? See our ROI report, "SOHO Servers" (below), for results

SOHO Servers — Return on Investment

R.O.I. PC Computing

Forget about convenience, workplace harmony, fewer headaches, and all those other karmic benefits a speedy server brings to the office. Let's talk cash. Exactly when do you make back the price of an upgrade? (It's sooner than you think.)

You cost too much. In fact, the average *PC Computing* reader draws $59,000 a year. That's a lot of scratch. Needless to say, your manager doesn't want you sitting slack-jawed, waiting for the server to run and fetch.

Let's conservatively assume that your IS department upgrades its 333MHz Pentium II box to a dual-CPU 400MHz Pentium II machine from Compaq or Tiger. The Compaq ProLiant 1600 costs $12,686; the Tiger Pro-Serv/400 goes for $6,899. Let's further assume that you spend 100 hours a month at your machine (this, too, is average for *PC Computing* readers).

Regardless of the applications

Network Payoff

Money-Back Guarantee **The low $6,899 sticker price on the Tiger server means you won't blow your budget and can still get a full ROI refund.**

you'll want to bring to your next budget meeting.

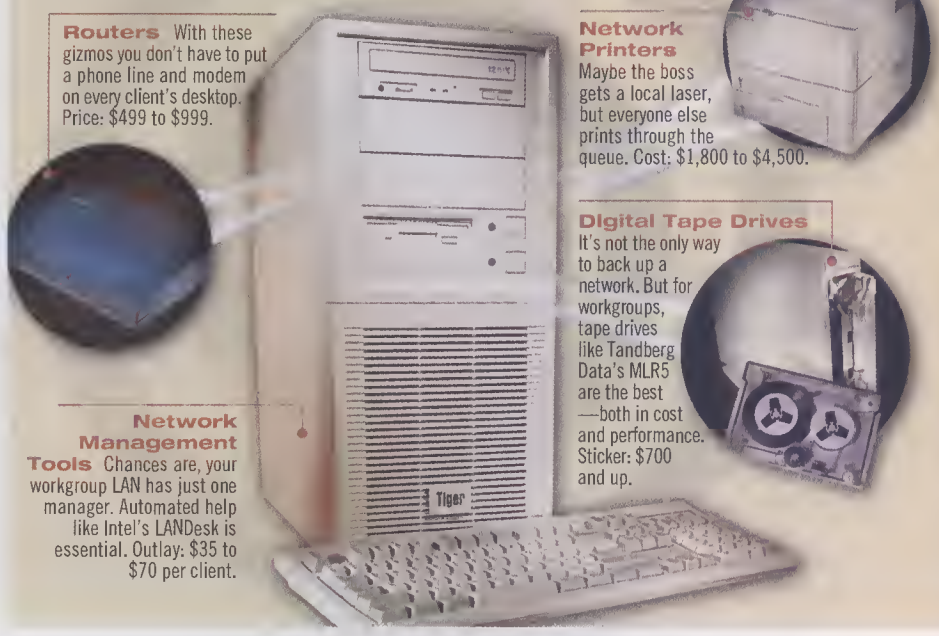
Even these numbers don't describe how much a reliable and well-designed server can save you in downtime. When the network heads south, you don't lose the productivity of just one worker; it's more akin to the effects of a labor strike. So in our usability testing, we placed great emphasis on the servers' overall design and their ability to make repairs and carry out routine maintenance quickly.

Machines that come with hot-swappable hard drives and power supplies got our nod. So did those designed to let you swap boards in a matter of seconds. We love cases that can be opened without a screwdriver. We scrutinized internal diagnostics. We gave extra credit for remote management. Servers that provide network administration tools not only save your LAN manager time and trouble; they ultimately save your company money. Better servers come bundled with these types of tools. And in the very best servers, they actually work.

Of course, numbers and feature lists don't tell the whole story. Your satisfaction with a server depends as much on your rapport with your vendor—what you can expect in terms of service and support. Not all the servers we tested come from big guns. But if you've been dissatisfied with your vendor, there are several machines in this roundup that give you good reason to walk.

Beyond the Box

Not so fast. You think that five-figure price tag on your server buys you into network nirvana? *Heh-heh.* You might be in for a shock with the costs of cabling and NICs alone.



Routers With these gizmos you don't have to put a phone line and modem on every client's desktop. Price: $499 to $999.

Network Printers Maybe the boss gets a local laser, but everyone else prints through the queue. Cost: $1,800 to $4,500.

Digital Tape Drives It's not the only way to back up a network. But for workgroups, tape drives like Tandberg Data's MLR5 are the best —both in cost and performance. Sticker: $700 and up.

Network Management Tools Chances are, your workgroup LAN has just one manager. Automated help like Intel's LANDesk is essential. Outlay: $35 to $70 per client.

Server Payback

Compaq	Tiger
672	676
HOURS GAINED	HOURS GAINED

Dirty Dozen **A 12-client workgroup gains nearly 700 hours annually by upgrading to a dual-CPU server.**

you use, you'll see a performance kick with the upgrade, which means higher productivity. With 12 clients in a workgroup, the server averages in the neighborhood of 56 to 58 percent faster. With 52 clients, it averages between 25 and 55 percent faster.

For simplicity's sake, let's say you install a new server on New Year's Day. If so, a Tiger machine serving a 12-client network would be paid for on May 10—in 130 days, by your higher productivity alone. The pricier Compaq server would make it on August 28—in 240 days. After one year, the Tiger server would save your company $12,270 in your billable hours; the Compaq would save $6,367. How much was your raise last year?

With a 52-client network, the Compaq earns its keep in 246 days; the Tiger in 297. You gain about 1 day a month with the client-stressed Tiger and a full 2.3 days with the speedier Compaq.

Network Adrenaline

NOTE: PRODUCTIVITY GAINS REFLECT THE TIME SAVED WHEN UPGRADING TO A DUAL-PENTIUM II SERVER.

Serve It Up **Despite a significant drop in performance as workgroup size increases, the Tiger server is ideal for small networks poised to grow.**

To figure out the ROI for your business, download the spreadsheet servROI.xls from www.pccomputing.com.

SOHO Saviors

There's nothing more depressing than an overloaded server—especially when it's sapping workgroup productivity. Adding capacity typically isn't the problem. Adding performance is. This is why Intel's 400MHz Pentium II is the most cost-effective platform for ensuring that your network doesn't hold you back. And what better way to maximize performance than by outfitting your box with a duo of CPUs?

Small networks won't see much advantage to using two high-megahertz chips. But as soon as you begin to add to the network load, the disparities are dramatic. With 60 clients, the servers we tested outpaced a single-CPU 333MHz machine by about 50 percent.

And none was faster than the Compaq ProLiant 1600—across the board. Its performance was utterly breathtaking. The machine loves a load. Its Smart Array 2 disk controller is especially fierce in high-traffic environments when files overload the cache. But credit also goes to its network interface card and drivers.

As you'd expect, the ProLiant's usability is up to Compaq standards. The case is tool-free. Drives and power supplies are hot-swappable. Cable routing is impeccable. And the server comes with Compaq's own Insight Manager desktop package, which monitors more than 1,000 functions in the server. It will certainly help save on the aspirin bill in any small shop.

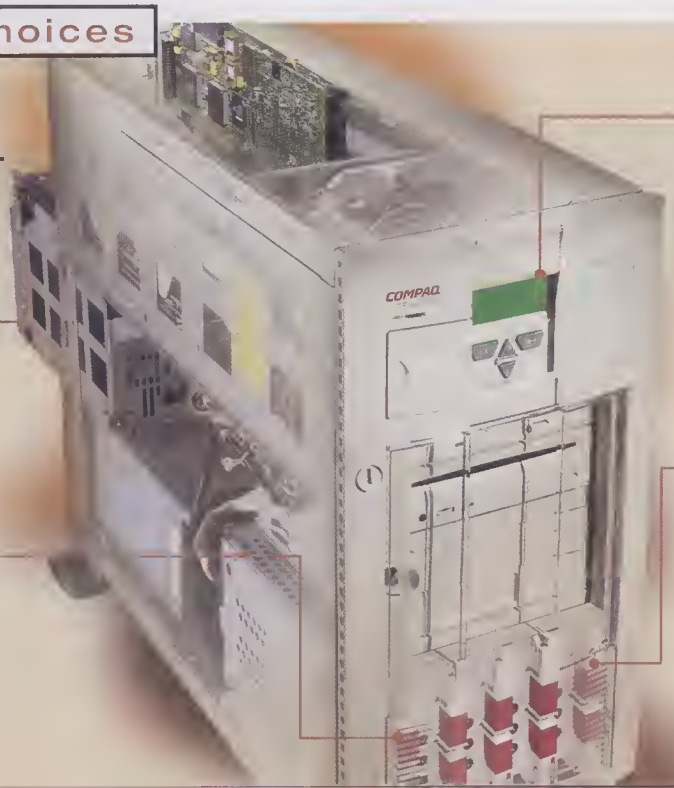
At $12,686—the priciest in this roundup—you wouldn't exactly call the ProLiant a bargain. But for the small company whose growth trajectory points auspiciously upward, you simply won't find a better box. It grows like bamboo.

The Dell PowerEdge 2300 saves you about $2,400 off the Compaq ProLiant's sticker price, and its performance is by no means shabby. It loses noticeable steam as a file server when the load exceeds 40 clients (only the Hewlett-Packard NetServer LH3 trailed it in NetBench performance). As a Web server, on the other

Tough Enough **The Compaq ProLiant 1600 is greedy for punishment. As the network load increases, its stunning performance gets even faster.**

Servers Smart Choices

As anyone who's never run a network will tell you, a server is just a big PC with lots of drive bays. Don't let these be your famous last words. Inside the box, there's a lot that can save your skin.



Hot Plug **This should apply not only to drives but also to power supplies. If nothing else, it will cut the number of angry messages on your voice mail.**

Easy Access **Swapping drives on a PC can take hours. On a network this is not an option, so look for boxes that get you in and out easily.**

Diagnostics **Some servers claim to monitor 1,000 or more internal activities for signs of trouble. Yet only a handful of those actually predict a failure. Still, better safe than sorry.**

Drive Bays **Six is about the right playing field, give or take. But as drive capacities continue to rise, a better measure for workgroups is a total of 24GB.**

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hand, the Dell PowerEdge performed near the top of the field.

You certainly won't complain about the PowerEdge's usability. The chassis is entirely tool-free. Hot-plug drives snap in and out by pressing a simple trigger latch. PCI cards seat themselves in their slots with plastic flip-lock retainers. There are front and rear locks for the case. The system board slides out with ease. And like the Compaq ProLiant, the PowerEdge comes with a multitude of manageability features.

Dell's service and support are legendary—especially if you've got a corporate account. As long as your network is relatively small (and you don't see it growing quickly anytime soon), its dollar value is excellent. And your IS folks will certainly thank you.

Of course, paying five figures for a computer—any computer—may not be an option. Perhaps you can forgo certain usability niceties. Maybe you can sacrifice a little in performance (and maybe you have no choice). The Tiger Pro-Serv/400 costs $6,899, making it the least expensive box in the roundup. That price, incidentally, includes more than 25GB of storage, the largest base capacity of any server we tested.

And its performance hums—for the most part. The Tiger Pro-Serv/400's NetBench performance lagged significantly behind that of the Compaq and Polywell servers. But it bested offerings from heavyweights Dell and Hewlett-Packard. It came in third fastest in our NetBench tests and fourth fastest when running WebBench. For networks that host 20 or fewer clients, its performance is as fast as any server you'll find. But when loads grow above 30 clients, its performance dips, while the Compaq's and Polywell's soar. If you're considering the Tiger server, make sure you stoke its drive controller with plenty of cache.

Priced Right **Not everyone can pony up five figures for a network server. The $6,899 Tiger Pro-Serv/400 is nearly half the price of the Compaq ProLiant but offers superb performance.**

Easy Does It **If you've ever wondered how Dell catapulted its servers into a multimillion dollar business, ask someone who's had to service a PowerEdge 2300.**

Leapin' LANs For that matter, the $7,499 Micron NetFrame 3100 is worth a look—especially as a Web server. It came in second only to the Compaq in our WebBench tests. Its NetBench scores hovered near the bottom, only slightly above the Dell PowerEdge's and the Hewlett-Packard NetServer's. But this owed to slow going early on. When the load ramped up, the Micron NetFrame accepted the challenge. It likes a big, busy crowd.

Polywell seems to have entered an uncomfortable adolescence where servers are concerned. A veritable newcomer only four years ago, the company has made steady gains. But its latest entry, the PolyServer 440NS2, is overpriced and its performance spreads all over the map. Its NetBench performance was superb—no doubt aided by a 32MB cache on its Mylex controller (double the amount on the Compaq). Yet its WebBench and ServerBench results were poor. And for $10,249, you can do better.

You can also do worse. The Gateway ALR 8200 and the Hewlett-Packard NetServer LH3 are enigmas in our tests. The $11,216 Gateway server in particular was a startling disappointment, given how well the company's servers have held up in previous tests. Performance on all tests was poor to middling. A price reduction is in order.

Ditto with Hewlett-Packard's eye-popping $12,282 HP NetServer LH3. It scored dead last in NetBench, and was second to last in WebBench testing. And its scores in ServerBench were ho-hum except for a decent high-load finish. Why? The machine uses 7,200-rpm hard drives; virtually all the other machines use 10,000-rpm drives. To be fair, the HP server's usability is first-rate—a pleasure to service and maintain.

A few new servers that you should keep in your sights—those from Sys and IBM and a departmental server from Dell—weren't ready in time for our review.

*Estimated reseller price to end users for Netfinity 3000 model 847615U includes IBM 4.5GB Hard Disk Drive. Certain features described below are available for an additional charge. Actual reseller prices may vary. For terms and conditions or copies of IBM's standard Limited Warranty, call 1 800 772-2227 in the U.S. Limited Warranty includes International Warranty Service in those countries where this product is sold by IBM or IBM Business Partners (registration required). MHz denotes microprocessor internal clock speed only; other factors may also affect application performance. IBM product names are trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation. Microsoft, Windows and Windows NT are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Lotus, Domino and Domino Intranet Starter Pack are trademarks of Lotus Development Corporation. The Intel Inside logo and Pentium are registered trademarks of Intel Corporation. ©1998 IBM Corp. All rights reserved.

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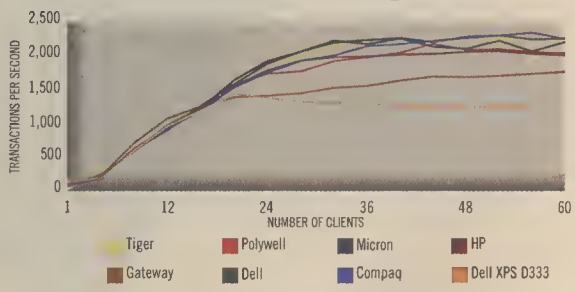
Server Performance Benchmarks

Second-grade teachers are like workgroup servers: They get dozens of concurrent demands urgently nagging for attention—some big, some little—and their performance can be measured only in snapshots.

Same with computers. Were you to divvy the labors of your average workgroup server into categories, they would probably go as follows: serve the Internet, serve files, serve applications. Call that the *x* axis. On the *y* axis, you'd have the number of students in class. The more students, the greater the load. That's how we tested. Under any given application (*x* axis), a server might perform miserably under low loads but sail when the pressure is on (*y* axis). And vice versa.

Before you make a purchase decision, check out your prospective machine's performance in each type of activity. Then cross-check it against how well it held up under a load. Though imperfect, this is the best report card you can hope for.

Performance: Web Serving



NOTE: WEBBENCH IS A TEST THAT MEASURES A SYSTEM'S PERFORMANCE AS A WEB SERVER.

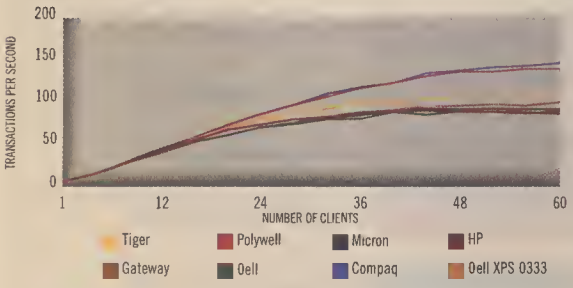
Stealth Screamer **The Micron, Tiger, and Dell machines prove themselves as formidable Web servers—across the board. The Compaq server, on the other hand, lags a tad in the middle stages of our testing. But give it a load, and it flies ahead of the pack.**

PRODUCT*	Price**	RAM As Tested/ Max. RAM	Hard Drives/ Swappable Bays	Network Interface Cards	Pros	Cons	Verdict
Polywell Computers PolyServer 440NS2 (800) 999-1278 *InfoLink No. 814*	**$10,249**	512MB/ 1GB	Six 4.55GB Seagate Cheetah/ Eight	Intel Ether-Express Pro/100 on-board	Breakneck app and file performance; generous cache.	Sluggish Web performance; overpriced.	☆☆☆☆ **Plenty of brawn, but keep it away from the Net.**
TigerDirect Tiger Pro-Serv/400 (800) 830-0056 *InfoLink No. 815*	**$6,899**	512MB/ 1GB	Six 4.3GB Seagate Cheetah 9LP/ None	Intel Ether-Express Pro/100+	Seductive price; fair performance.	Could use a little more go and drive acreage.	☆☆☆☆ **A promising rookie that won't bust your budget.**
Gateway ALR 8200 (800) 846-2000 *InfoLink No. 816*	**$11,216**	512MB/ 1GB	Six 4.55GB Seagate Cheetah/ Six	Adaptec Dual Port 10/100	Good design; plush configuration.	Slow; expensive.	☆☆☆ **High price and slow performance don't compute. You can do better for half the cash.**
Hewlett-Packard HP NetServer LH3 (800) 752-0900	**$12,282**	512MB/ 1GB	Six 4GB Ultra-2 HDD/ 12	HP 10/100 TX PCI LAN NIC	Superb usability.	Nose-bloodying price; slow drive performance.	☆☆☆ **An IS staff's dream, an accountant and client's nightmare. Wait for the sale.**

*FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK. **ESTIMATED STREET PRICE.

☆☆☆☆☆ EXCELLENT ☆☆☆☆ GOOD ☆☆☆ ACCEPTABLE ☆☆ POOR ☆ UNACCEPTABLE

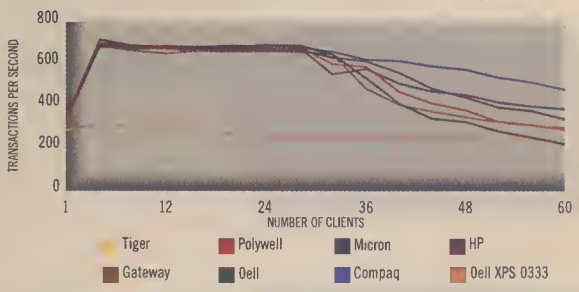
Performance: File Serving



NOTE: NETBENCH IS A TEST THAT MEASURES A SYSTEM'S PERFORMANCE AS A FILE SERVER.

Santa Monica Express **At the very least, the mettle of a good server is measured in how many files it can move in any given time. The Compaq ProLiant leads here, thanks to its Smart Array 2 disk controller. The Polywell server benefits from its 32MB cache.**

Performance: Application Serving



NOTE: SERVERBENCH MEASURES THE PERFORMANCE OF APPLICATION SERVERS IN A CLIENT-SERVER ENVIRONMENT.

Spinning Platters **Nothing tests a server's disk subsystem like running applications. Once again, the Compaq ProLiant leads under a heavy load. The Dell and Hewlett-Packard servers also shine when traffic gets thick.**

Closet Smokers

No one in any workgroup gives a belch about the network server—until it starts to chug . . . or goes down entirely. At which wondrous moment blame heaps not upon machinery. It heaps upon you.

Look at it this way: If you get the right server, you'll no longer find yourself in tense meetings, fixating on that pulsing vein in your boss's neck. The productivity gains across the organization could very well do friendly things to your 401(k) plan—or to next year's raise.

Going cheap on a workgroup server is foolish. Prices for the servers we tested varied by about 74 percent. If this seems gallingly steep, remember that the total price of a machine should be divided among the number of clients it serves. Spread the costs, spread the wealth.

When you need the very best, you won't find better than the Compaq ProLiant 1600—especially if your network is poised for growth. Its performance will rock you back on your heels, regardless of whether it's serving files, applications, or the Web. And the more clients you hurl at it, the better it holds its own.

As Web servers go, the Micron NetFrame 3100 performs almost as well as the ProLiant and costs about $5,000 less. It's a fine all-around machine. For the best design, usability, and service, look no further than the Dell PowerEdge 2300. Its performance sagged in file server tasks, but it soared as an app and Web server. And if your budget pinches like bad Italian slippers, consider the Tiger Pro-Serv/400. It costs a mere $6,899. Its performance is admirable and its usability is decent too, even if it lacks some of the Dell's advanced features.

Bear in mind that server upgrade costs are deceptive—in ways that both please and perturb. Often as not, upgrading the box also entails upgrading hubs, routers, printers, and a raft of administration tools. But as with faster performance from the server itself, these often pay for themselves, just not as quickly.

On the other hand, our return-on-investment analysis shows that even a modest uptick in server performance becomes magnified across the workgroup.

Lab testing was performed by ZD LABS *and* IBRAHIM GUL. *Lab Manager,* LULIT BEZUAYEHU.

DECISION MAKER — WHICH SERVER IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

1 Choose the factor that's most important.	2 Choose the next most important factor.	3 What else is important?	4 For your needs, the best server is . . .
Performance	Price	Features	Micron NetFrame 3100
		Expandability	Dell PowerEdge 2300
	Usability	Features	Compaq ProLiant 1600
		Expandability	Compaq ProLiant 1600
Price	Performance	Features	Tiger Pro-Serv/400
		Expandability	Tiger Pro-Serv/400
	Usability	Features	Dell PowerEdge 2300
		Expandability	Dell PowerEdge 2300
Usability	Performance	Features	Compaq ProLiant 1600
		Expandability	Compaq ProLiant 1600
	Price	Features	Dell PowerEdge 2300
		Expandability	Dell PowerEdge 2300

Quantex customers are happier than IBM, Gateway, or Micron customers.[1]

Are you?

[1]Results based on a Windows Magazine (Aug. '97) 'Technical Support Survey' in which Quantex received a 91% 'Buy Again Rating,' higher than that received by IBM, Micron and Gateway and on PC Magazine (July '98) 'Service and Reliability Survey' in which Quantex received the highest ratings for its customers' 'Tech Support Experience' in 4 out of 5 categories including 'tech was knowledgeable, tech tried everything to help, prompt resolution and got a run-around.' Calculations based on 25 vendors evaluated in the survey.

It's about time you

Quantex systems feature the Intel® Pentium® II processor

Today, Quantex is one of the world's largest direct marketers of computer systems, featuring the Intel® Pentium® II processor. And in the last year, Quantex has consistently placed at or near the top in surveys of customer satisfaction and tech support. As well as winning dozens of product rating awards in the most respected publications.

As more businesses and experts say good things about Quantex, you're bound to wonder, "How good can they be?" There's one way to find out.

DELL NUDGES OUT QUANTEX BY 1% FOR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION. QUANTEX CUSTOMERS VERY HAPPY. MANAGEMENT NOT[1].

OK. We may not be number one in total customer satisfaction yet, but we're real close. And we can do better. That's why so many people who have bought Quantex say they'll buy Quantex again. And do. And they tell others. How else could we get this big when most people still don't even know our name?

WOULD YOU BUY AGAIN?

Vendor	% who would buy the same brand
Dell	92%
Quantex	**91%**
IBM	B9%
Micran	81%
Goteway	B0%
Acer	74%
Digital	69%
Toshibo	61%
Compoq	58%
Packard Bell	51%

Windows Magazine, 8/97

QUANTEX RATED NUMBER ONE IN TECH SUPPORT. #2-#25 NEED TO TRY HARDER[2].

In the most recent *PC Magazine* study, PC owners rated Quantex the leader for tech support based on their own experiences. For the technical knowledge of our people and the promptness of the resolution, no one beat Quantex. And no one came within 10 points

COMPUTER SHOPPER 1997 Direct Channel Achievement Award

PC COMPUTING 1997 Most Valuable Product Award

PC COMPUTING 5 Star Rating (11/98)

PC COMPUTING 5 Star Rating (10/98)

PC WORLD Best Buy Award (10/98)

PC WORLD Best Buy Award (9/98)

PC WORLD #1 Best Buy Award (8/98)

PC WORLD #1 Best Buy Award (7/98)

[1]Results based on a Windows Magazine (Aug. '97) 'Technical Support Survey' in which Quantex received a 91% 'Buy Again Rating,' higher than that received by IBM, Micron and Gateway.

experienced Quantex.

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for "tech tried everything to help." Not Dell. Not Gateway. Not Micron. Not IBM. Not Compaq.

Hey, we may not be a household name yet. So we go the extra mile. And our customers notice it.

TECH SUPPORT EXPERIENCE

Vendor	Tech was knowledgeable	Tech tried everything to help	Prompt resolution	Got a run-around
Quantex	**57%**	**59%**	**49%**	**9%**
Micron	56%	47%	43%	9%
Gateway	54%	48%	45%	10%
Dell	54%	43%	49%	10%
IBM	41%	33%	36%	15%
Compaq	37%	30%	30%	17%
Average*	**40%**	**33%**	**32%**	**16%**

"Service and Reliability Survey," PC Magazine, July 1998
* calculations based on all 25 PC vendors evaluated in the survey.

QUANTEX SYSTEMS KEEP WINNING. COMPETITION AT A LOSS.

Obviously, it takes a lot more than great support to generate great customer satisfaction. And more than VERY competitive prices. It takes great computers featuring the Intel Pentium® II processor. And Quantex configures them with industry-standard "enhancements" that make Quantex systems regular winners in the "best buy" category.

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PC WORLD #1 Best Buy Award (6/98)

WINDOWS MAGAZINE WINLIST Award (10/98)

WINDOWS MAGAZINE WINLIST Award (7/98)

C|NET ONLINE Editors' Choice Award (8/98)

C|NET ONLINE Editors' Choice Award (6/98)

PC PORTABLES Best Buy Award (3/98)

PC COMPUTING 4-star "Torture Test" Survivor (4/98)

PC COMPUTING 4-star Rating (9/98)

'Results based on PC Magazine (July '98) 'Service and Reliability Survey' in which Quantex received the highest ratings for its customers' 'Tech Support Experience' in 4 out of 5 categories including 'tech was knowledgeable, tech tried everything to help, prompt resolution and got a run-around.' Calculations based on 25 vendors evaluated in the survey.

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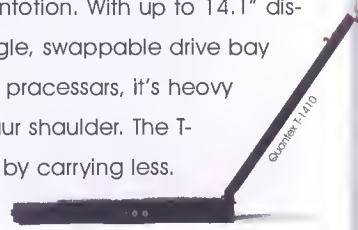
It's time ta stap thinking obaut nateboaks as a campramise between mobility ond perfarmance. Quontex presents the T-Series Natebaok, full-feotured pawer in a lightweight mabile computing salutian. It packs huge performonce and flexibility into o leon 1.43" thin, 6.4-paund system^, perfect far warking an a plane ar during an impartant presentotion. With up to 14.1" disploys, AGP grophics, a single, swappable drive bay ond the fastest Pentium® II pracessars, it's heovy an feotures but light on yaur shaulder. The T-Series: stort packing mare by carrying less.

Starting at just $1999



Quontex T-1410

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- 4.3GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 15" Digital Monitor (13.8" viewable)
- 64-bit 3D PCI Graphics Card with 4MB RDRAM
- ***New*** **Intel Pro 10/100 PCI Ethernet Controller w/RJ-45 and Wake-On-LAN Technology**
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports / DMI 2.0
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- MS Natural Keyboard Elite with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service*
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- *Upgrade to Windows NT Workstation 4.0 for $99*

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QP6/350 SB-1(w/ Pentium® II Processor)..... $1099

QP6/350 SB-2 $1399

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- 64MB PC100 SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 17" Digital Monitor w/ OSD (15.8" viewable)
  Upgrade to 17" Monitor w/NEC CromaClear CRT for $79
- Intel740™ 3D 2X AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- ***New*** **Intel Pro 10/100 PCI Ethernet Controller w/RJ-45 and Wake-On-LAN Technology**
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- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- MS Natural Keyboard Elite with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- **Microsoft Office '97 SBE v2.0**
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- 8.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- **17" Digital Monitor w/DSD & NEC CromaClear CRT** (16.0" viewable; .25 dp; 1600x1200 max. resolution)
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- ***New*** **Intel Pro 10/100 PCI Ethernet Controller w/RJ-45 and Wake-On-LAN Technology**
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- 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports / DMI 2.0
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- MS Natural Keyboard Elite with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows NT 4.0 Workstation
- **Microsoft Office '97 SBE v2.0**
  Upgrade to MS Office '97 Professional for $199
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
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- *Upgrade to 15.0" LCD Flat-Panel Display for $549*

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- 64MB PC100 SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
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- **19" Monitor w/ OSD** (18.1" viewable), 1600x1200, .26dp
- ***New Ultra-Fast*** **#9 Revolution IV 12B-bit 3D 2X AGP Graphics w/32MB**
- ***New*** **Intel Pro 10/100 PCI Ethernet Controller w/RJ-45 and Wake-On-LAN Technology**
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports / DMI 2.0
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- MS Natural Keyboard Elite with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows NT 4.0 Workstation
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  Upgrade to MS Office '97 Professional for $199
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Business lease: $70/Mo.

- Pentium® II processor 233MHz
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- ***New*** **Ultra-Thin Design (12.44"x9.84"x1.37")**
- 13.3" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 32MB SDRAM / 512KB Secondary Cache
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- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

T-1310 w/Pentium II processor 266MHz..... $2199

Quantex T-1400 $2499

Business lease: $88/Mo.

- Pentium® II processor 266MHz
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- 14.1" XGA Active Matrix Display
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- 56K V.90 Fax/Modem*
- 24X Modular CD-ROM Drive & 3.5" Modular Floppy Drive
- ***New*** **NeoMagic NMG5 128-bit AGP Video**
- Integrated 16-bit Stereo Sound and Speakers
- Smart Lithium Ion Battery
- **Mini-Docking Station**
- USB and Fast IR Ports / Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 98 / Microsoft Office '97 SBE v2.0
- Duantex Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

T-1400 w/Pentium II processor 300MHz..... $2699

Quantex T-1410 $2849

Business lease: $100/Mo.

- Pentium® II processor 300MHz
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- ***New*** **Ultra-Thin Design (12.44"x9.84"x1.43")**
- 14.1" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 80MB SDRAM / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 6GB Ultra ATA HD
- 56K V.90 Fax/Modem*
- ***New*** **2X Modular DVD-ROM Drive** & 3.5" Floppy Drive
- ***New*** **NeoMagic NMG5 128-bit AGP Video**
- Integrated 16-bit Stereo Sound and Speakers
- Smart Lithium Ion Battery
- USB and Fast IR Ports / Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 98
- Microsoft Office '97 SBE v2.0
- Duantex Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

Quantex T-1411 $3099

Business lease: $104/Mo.

- Pentium® II Processor 300MHz
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- ***New*** **Ultra-Thin Design (12.44"x9.84"x1.43")**
- 14.1" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 96MB SDRAM / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 6GB Ultra ATA HD
- 56K V.90 Fax/Modem*
- ***New*** **2X Modular DVD-ROM Drive** & 3.5" Floppy Drive
- ***New*** **NeoMagic NMG5 128-bit AGP Video**
- Integrated 16-bit Stereo Sound and Speakers
- **Two Smart Lithium Ion Batteries**
- **Mini-Docking Station**
- USB and Fast IR Ports / Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 98 / Microsoft Office '97 SBE v2.0
- Duantex Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

Quantex I-1400 $2299

Business lease: $81/Mo.

- Pentium® II processor 266MHz
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- 14.1" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 64MB SDRAM / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 4GB Ultra ATA HD
- 56K V.90 Fax/Modem*
- Removable 24X CD-ROM Drive & 3.5" Floppy Drive
- ***New*** **ATI Rage Lt Pro 3D AGP Video w/8MB**
- ***New*** **ESS 3D Wavetable Surround Sound and Speakers**
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- USB and Fast IR Ports / Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 98 / Corel Office Suite 8
- Duantex Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

I-1400 w/Pentium II processor 300MHz $2549

Quantex I-1411 $3399

Business lease: $114/Mo.

- Pentium® II Processor 300MHz
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- 14.1" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 128MB SDRAM / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 8GB Ultra ATA HD
- 56K V.90 Fax/Modem*
- ***New*** **Removable 2X DVD-ROM Drive & 3.5" Floppy Drive**
- ***New*** **ATI Rage Lt Pro 3D AGP Video w/8MB**
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- ***New*** **Two Long-Lasting 12-Cell Smart Lithium Ion Batteries**
- **Mini-Docking Station**
- USB and Fast IR Ports / Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 98 / Microsoft Office '97 SBE v2.0
- Duantex Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

I-1411 w/Pentium II processor 266MHz $3199

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MS Plus 98: McAfee VirusScan, File Cleaner, Start Menu cleaner, Compressed Folders, Deluxe CD Cleaner, MS Pictures It! Express, Lose your marbles, Spider Solitaire, Golf 1998 lite, Desktop Theme

QP6/333 M-1c $1099

Business lease: $39/Mo.

- Intel® Celeron™ Processor 333MHz
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 128KB Secondary Cache
- 6.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 15" Digital Monitor (13.8" viewable)
- 64-Bit 3D PCI Graphics Accelerator with 4MB
- 56K V.90 PCI Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64V Wavetable 3D Sound
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
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- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

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QP6/400 M-2x(with Pentium II processor).....$1599

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- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64V Wavetable 3D Sound
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/350 M-3x(with Pentium II processor).....$1549
QP6/450 M-3x(with Pentium II processor).....$1899

QP6/450 M-4x $2049

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- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
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QP6/350 SM-1x $1499

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- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64V Wavetable 3D Sound
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
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QP6/400 SM-1x(with Pentium II processor).....$1649

QP6/400 SM-2x $1899

Business lease: $67/Mo.

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- 56K V.90 PCI Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- *New* 3rd-Generation 4.8X DVD-ROM Drive
- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64V Wavetable 3D Sound
- Altec-Lansing ACS-45.1 Speakers with subwoofer
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- MS Natural Keyboard Elite with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
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QP6/400 SM-3x $2149

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- 19" Monitor w/DSD (18.1" viewable), 1600x1200, .26dp
- Intel740™ 3D 2X AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- Internal 100MB Zip Drive with one cartridge
- 56K V.90 PCI Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- *New* 3rd-Generation 4.8X DVD-ROM Drive
- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64V Wavetable 3D Sound
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
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QP6/400 M-4x SE(with Pentium II processor).....$1999

QP6/450 SM-4x SE $2849

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- Internal 100MB Zip Drive with one cartridge
- 56K V.90 PCI Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64V Wavetable 3D Sound
- *New* Altec-Lansing ADA-305 Dolby 3D Surround Sound Speakers & subwoofer
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- MS Natural Keyboard Elite with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
- Microsoft Office '97 SBE v2.0
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/400 SM-4x SE(with Pentium II processor).....$2649

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- Intel740™ 3D 2X AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- 56K V.90 PCI Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- *New* 3rd-Generation 4.8X DVD-ROM Drive
- SoundBlaster AudioPCI 64V Wavetable 3D Sound
- Altec-Lansing ACS-45.1 Speakers w/Subwoofer
- Duantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
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- *Add a Internal Zip Drive for $ 79*

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Business lease: $88/Mo.

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- 19" Monitor w/DSD (18.1" viewable), 1600x1200, .26dp
- Intel740™ 3D 2X AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- Internal 100MB Zip Drive with one cartridge
- 56K V.90 PCI Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- *New* 3rd-Generation 4.8X DVD-ROM Drive
- Aureal "A3D" 3D Positional PCI Sound
- 3Dfx Voodoo2 based 3D Game Accelerator w/12MB
- MS SideWinder 3D Pro Joystick
- *New* Altec-Lansing ADA-305 Dolby 3D Surround Sound Speakers & subwoofer
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- MS Natural Keyboard Elite with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 98 w/Microsoft Plus 98
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
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- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/400 GX-2(with Pentium II processor).....$2299

intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

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Best use of digital photography in a live or Web-based presentation.
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Best use of digital photography in a newsletter, magazine, book, brochure, or other printed matter.
Winner Prize: UMAX Astra 1220U, HP PhotoSmart Printer, MGI PhotoSuite II, ATI All-In-Wonder Pro, Olympus D-600L, $100 Coupon for DVD Express provided by Pandesic, Lexar CompactFlash Digital Film Pack 32 MB

Creative Expression
Best use of digital photography in a noncommercial, artistic application - be imaginative!
Winner Prize: UMAX Astra 1220U, HP DeskJet 722c, MGI PhotoSuite II, ATI All-In-Wonder Pro, Olympus D-600L, $100 Coupon for DVD Express provided by Pandesic, Lexar SmartMedia Digital Film Reader

Travel
Best use of digital photography to capture images from a business or leisure trip.
Winner Prize: UMAX Astra 1220U, HP DeskJet 722c, MGI PhotoSuite II, ATI All-In-Wonder Pro, Olympus D-600L, $100 Coupon for DVD Express provided by Pandesic, Lexar CompactFlash Digital Film Reader

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Best overall use of digital photography in one of the preceding five categories.
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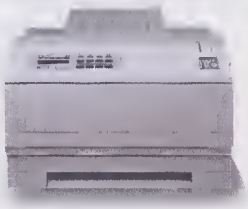

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Ethernet (10BaseT, 10Base2), Parallel

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Hidden Win98 Utilities

Those who lament that Windows 98 offers nothing new haven't been looking in the right places. Microsoft tucked its most valuable new features into obscure, backwater locations. We show you how to uncover a host of new utilities to keep your system lean and mean.

1. Gather System Information Windows 95 excelled in hiding away its system-reporting utility. (Hint: It's stuck in the Control Panel's System applet's Device Manager tab—click on My Computer, then on Properties.) The old Win95 reporter is still there in Windows 98, but it's been upstaged by a sophisticated new System Information utility. SysInfo—as insiders know it—sits in a completely different corner of Windows: Click on Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, System Information.

Win98 SysInfo offers a detailed view of the hardware and software that resides on or in your system. All the old DOS troublemakers are there: IRQs, DMAs, and I/O addresses. Alongside them sit the new troublemakers: forced Plug and Play assignments, details on USB ports and infrared devices, audio and video codecs, and more.

Unlike the old Win95 report, which confined itself to hardware basics (and wasn't always entirely accurate), SysInfo tells you everything you want to know about the inner workings of your system software, and some applications too.

You can print a complete description of your system—and you should do this at least once in the life of your PC. But brace yourself: SysInfo doles out info by the bucket, and your system's report could run well over 100 pages.

2. Check System Files Don't leave SysInfo just yet. Several important Win98 utilities are accessible only from its Tools menu.

System File Checker examines all your system files (DLL, EXE, SYS, VXD) and calculates a Cyclic Redundancy Check (CRC) number for each one. The CRC is constructed so that a single bit flipped in a system file generates a CRC that differs from the original CRC. System File Checker compares the calculated CRCs with a list of CRCs stored in the file C:\Windows\default.sfc and, if it discovers a discrepancy, offers to reinstall the presumably corrupt file from the Win98 CD.

To get to System File Checker click on Tools, System File Checker. Click on the Settings button in the main dialog box and choose the files you want to check. Win98 calculates the CRC the first time you run it with a new file type and stores the CRC in default.sfc. On subsequent runs, it checks the files you picked against the CRCs in default.sfc.

In addition, System File Checker can find a single file on your Win98 installation CD and install it to the correct location on your hard drive. (For details, see "Tame Win98 System Files," page 310.)

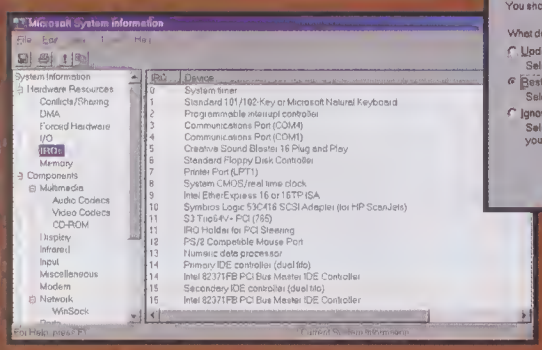
3. Manage Version Conflicts Next you should check out Windows 98's Version Conflict Manager. Its goal is to keep your system stable. Here's how it works.

When Windows 98 installs itself, it overwrites all sorts of things: files, Registry entries, programs, and more.

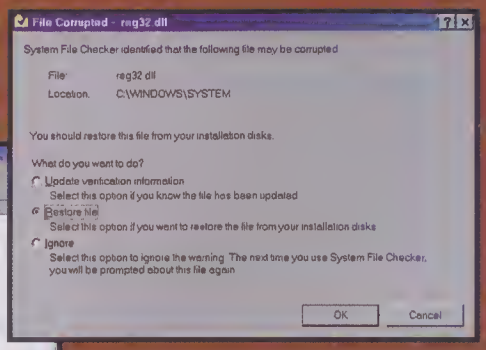
The Win98 CD contains a set of known good programs. Microsoft tested the living daylights out of Windows using this very precise set of applications. Win98 has a much better chance of starting and running properly if these programs are installed.

When Windows wants to install a file—say,

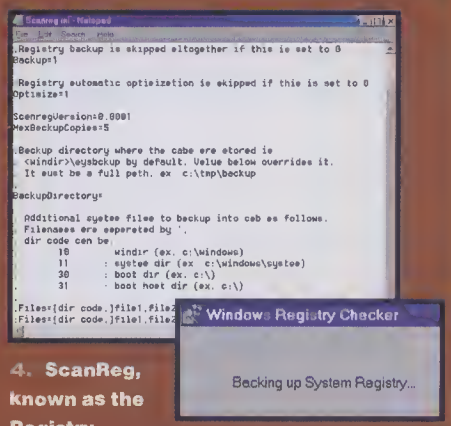
(continued on page 308)



1. SysInfo offers a thorough and accurate summary of all the hardware and much of the software—including some applications—installed on your PC.



2. Find out if you have a corrupted system file with System File Checker, which offers to reinstall the file for you automatically.



4. ScanReg, known as the Registry Checker on the SysInfo Tools menu, scans and backs up the Registry.

Hidden Win98 Utilities

(continued from page 307)

vserver.vxd—it first looks on your hard drive to see if there's already a copy of that file. If there is, Windows checks to see if the version of vserver.vxd on the Win98 CD is more current than the version sitting on your hard drive. If Win98's version is newer, it tosses the old version and installs the new one.

A problem arises when the version on your hard drive is newer than the one on the Win98 CD. If that happens, Win98 still installs its version of vserver.vxd. But instead of just dumping the original vserver.vxd, it copies its version to C:\Windows\vcm. It's true that the Win98 installer should give you some sort of warning about what it's doing (it doesn't)—but the approach is basically sound: You can get Win98 up and working, then slowly move your newer files back into service.

Take a look at which newer versions of programs (typically drivers) were displaced by older versions on the Win98 installation CD by checking the Version Conflict Manager. Bring up the System Information utility and click on Tools, Version Conflict Manager. Follow the instructions from there to restore displaced files.

4. Scan the Registry If you have fond nightmares of working with system.dat and user.1st files, you'll appreciate ScanReg, the Windows 98 Registry maintenance utility. ScanReg runs automatically every time you start Windows. It checks for obvious screw-ups in the Registry, and prunes away deleted keys.

You can also start ScanReg manually: Bring up the System Information utility and click on Tools, Registry Checker. ScanReg takes off immediately and alerts you to any problems.

ScanReg creates a new backup of the Registry every time it runs. It stores backups in a five-deep series of Windows CAB compressed files called rb*.cab—rb0000.cab, rb0001.cab, and so on—in C:\Windows\Sysbckup. To restore the backups, boot to the DOS prompt and run scanreg (the DOS version of the program).

5. Perform Maintenance Win98 includes a handy utility called the Maintenance Wizard, which lets you schedule regular runs of the disk maintenance utilities Disk Defragmenter, CleanUp, and ScanDisk. To launch it, click on Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and Maintenance Wizard.

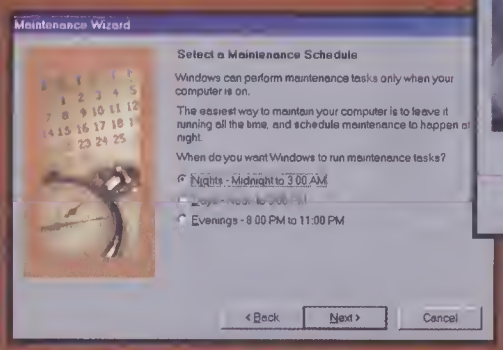
Unless you set a schedule from within the Maintenance Wizard, Defrag and ScanDisk run once a week, while CleanUp runs once a month.

6. Schedule Tasks You can schedule more than just system maintenance in the Maintenance Wizard. Windows 98's scheduler automatically launches any program whenever your PC is running. Double-click on the tiny icon that looks like a clock on top of a calendar in the Taskbar Notification Area. Double-click on the line marked Add Scheduled Task and follow the Scheduled Task Wizard to set up a maintenance routine or to automate other tasks.

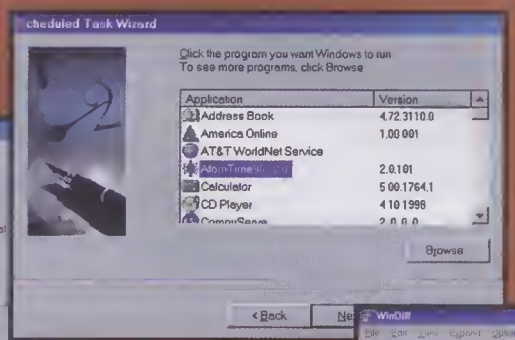
7. Compare Files Another useful, hidden Win98 utility, WinDiff compares two files or two folders and highlights the differences. You have to install it from the Windows 98 CD, where it's buried in the Windows 98 Resource Kit Tools Sampler. Run setup.exe from the CD's \Tools\Reskit folder. When you're done, windiff.exe doesn't appear on the Start, Programs, Windows 98 Resource Kit menu; instead, you have to go fishing for it at C:\Program Files\Win98RK\windiff.exe. Double-click on it to start.

Once it's running, click on File, Compare Two Files; wait a minute or two while the comparison takes place; then hit F8 to cycle through all the differences.

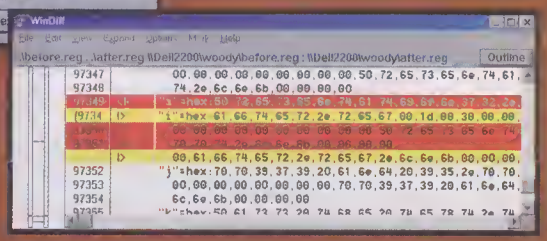
Contributing Editor Woody Leonhard has written more than a dozen books on Windows and Microsoft Office, including *The Mother of All Windows 98 Books* (with Barry Simon). Subscribe to Woody's Office Watch (WOW), his free weekly electronic newsletter, by sending a blank message to wow@wopr.com. **Edited by** Liesl La Grange Noble.



5. The Maintenance Wizard takes your usual schedule into account when setting times for running maintenance chores.



6. Set programs and maintenance to run automatically with the Scheduled Task Wizard.



7. Quickly compare two files with WinDiff, a hidden utility you'll find on the Win98 CD.

Files Lost

oops...

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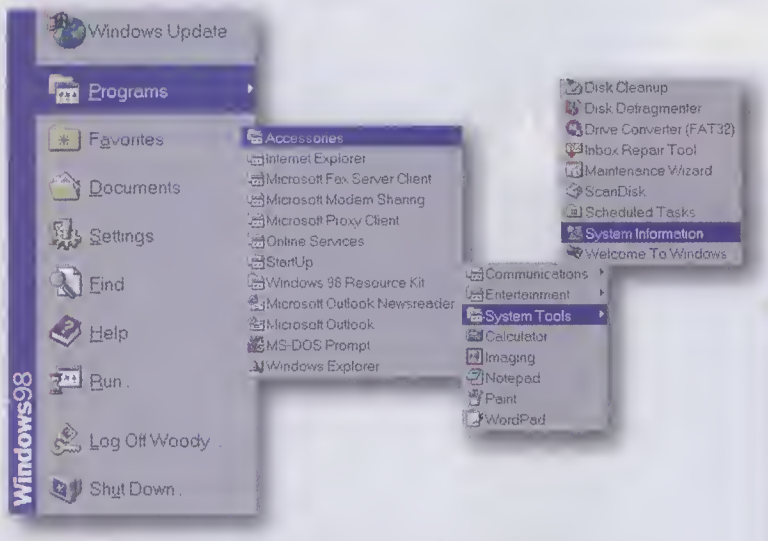
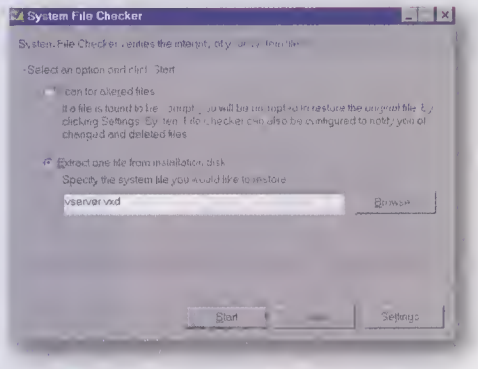
By Woody Leonhard
For more Windows tips and tricks, head to www.pccomputing.com

Tame Win98 System Files

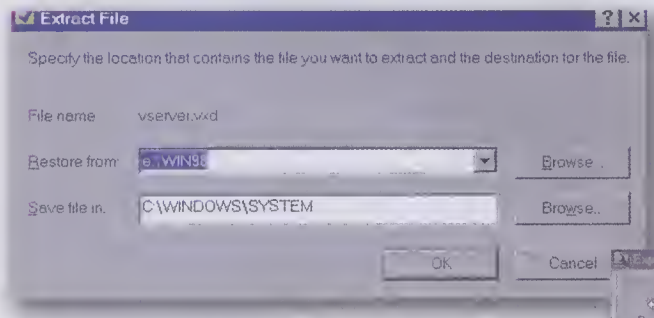
Ever started Windows 98, only to be greeted by a lengthy message saying Windows can't find one of the files listed in the Registry, and you'd better go get it—quick? Or what do you do if you unintentionally clobber one of your system files? Here's a shortcut for recovering essential Win98 files.



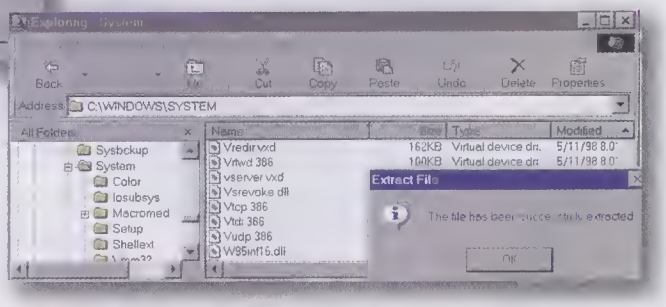
Step 1 Don't panic—you don't have to go sifting through the thousands of files on the Windows 98 installation CD. Instead, bring up the Win98 System Information Utility by clicking on Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, System Information.



Step 2 Click on Tools, then System File Checker to bring up this screen. Click on Extract One File from Installation Disk, and type in the name of the appropriate file. In this case, when Windows 98 booted it said that it couldn't find vserver.vxd—that's the file you need. Click on Start.



Step 3 Now Windows 98's Extract File utility consults its own internal database and determines that the file you want is in the \Win98 folder of the installation CD, and it should be placed in the C:\Windows\System folder. Click on OK.



Step 4 The Extract File utility reaches into the compressed CAB files on your Win98 installation CD, finds the file, extracts it, and places it in the location you chose. That's all it takes!

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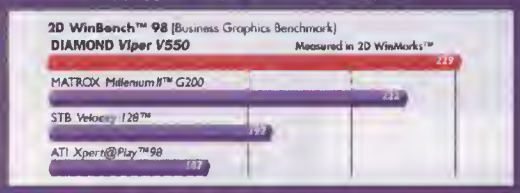

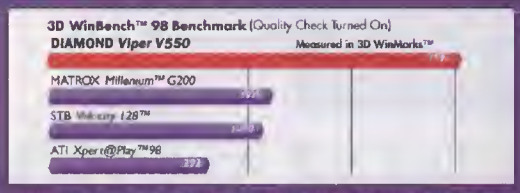

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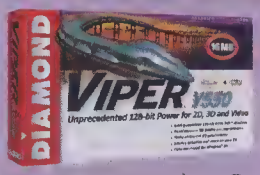

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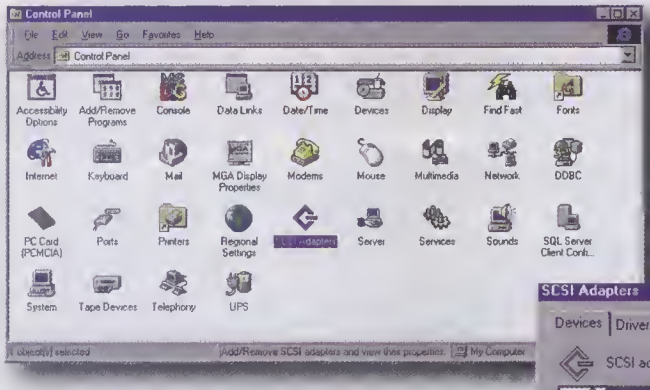
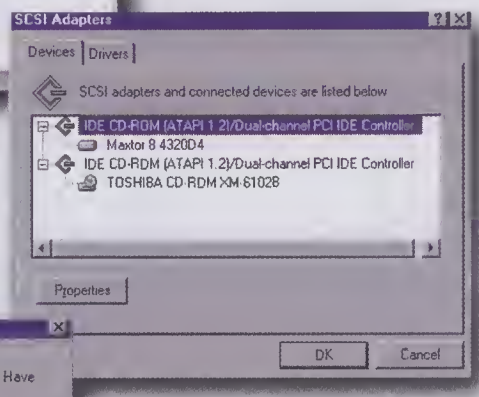
By Ed Bott
For more Windows NT and Win98 news, head to www.pccomputing.com/edbott

Install New NT Hardware

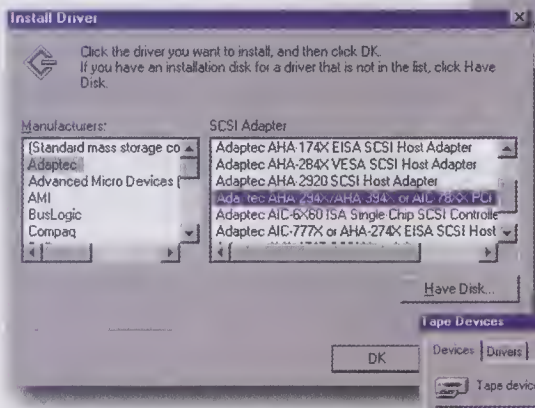
Adding a new peripheral to a Windows NT 4.0 system is no picnic. Because there's no Plug and Play support and no Add New Hardware Wizard, you need to add drivers for each new device. Our challenge this month: to add a new SCSI adapter and tape drive. Open Control Panel and let's get started.



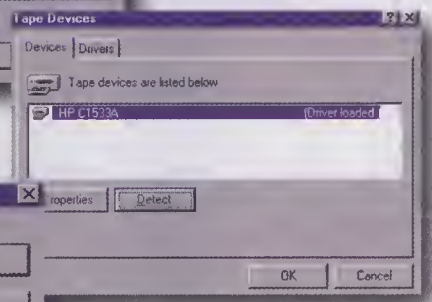
Step 1 Every class of device has its own Control Panel option: Display for video devices, Multimedia for sound cards, Network for a new LAN adapter. Choose SCSI Adapters.



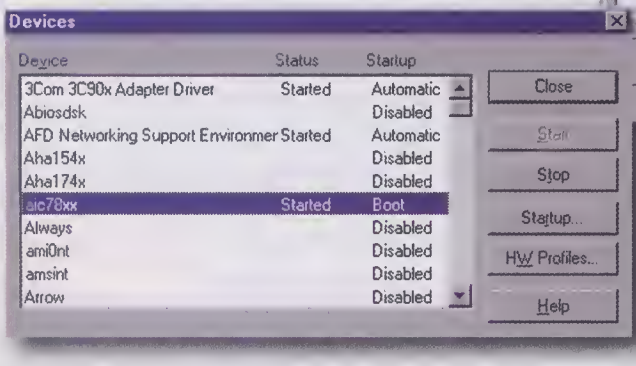
Step 2 The Devices tab displays a list of all currently installed controllers and attached devices. Note that IDE devices show up here as well.



Step 3 To add a driver for the new device, click on the Drivers tab, then the Add button. Pick from this list or click on the Have Disk button if you have an updated driver. For most devices, you'll have to get the driver from the original NT CD-ROM.



Step 4 Once you've installed the driver, restart your system, return to Control Panel, and open the Tape Devices applet. Click on the Detect button and NT should find your new device.



Step 5 Use the Devices option in Control Panel to make sure all new devices are started and working properly. Finally, reinstall all Service Packs and hotfixes.

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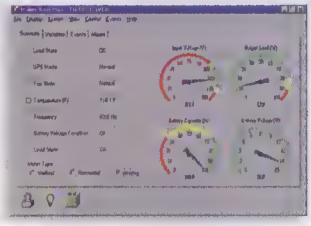

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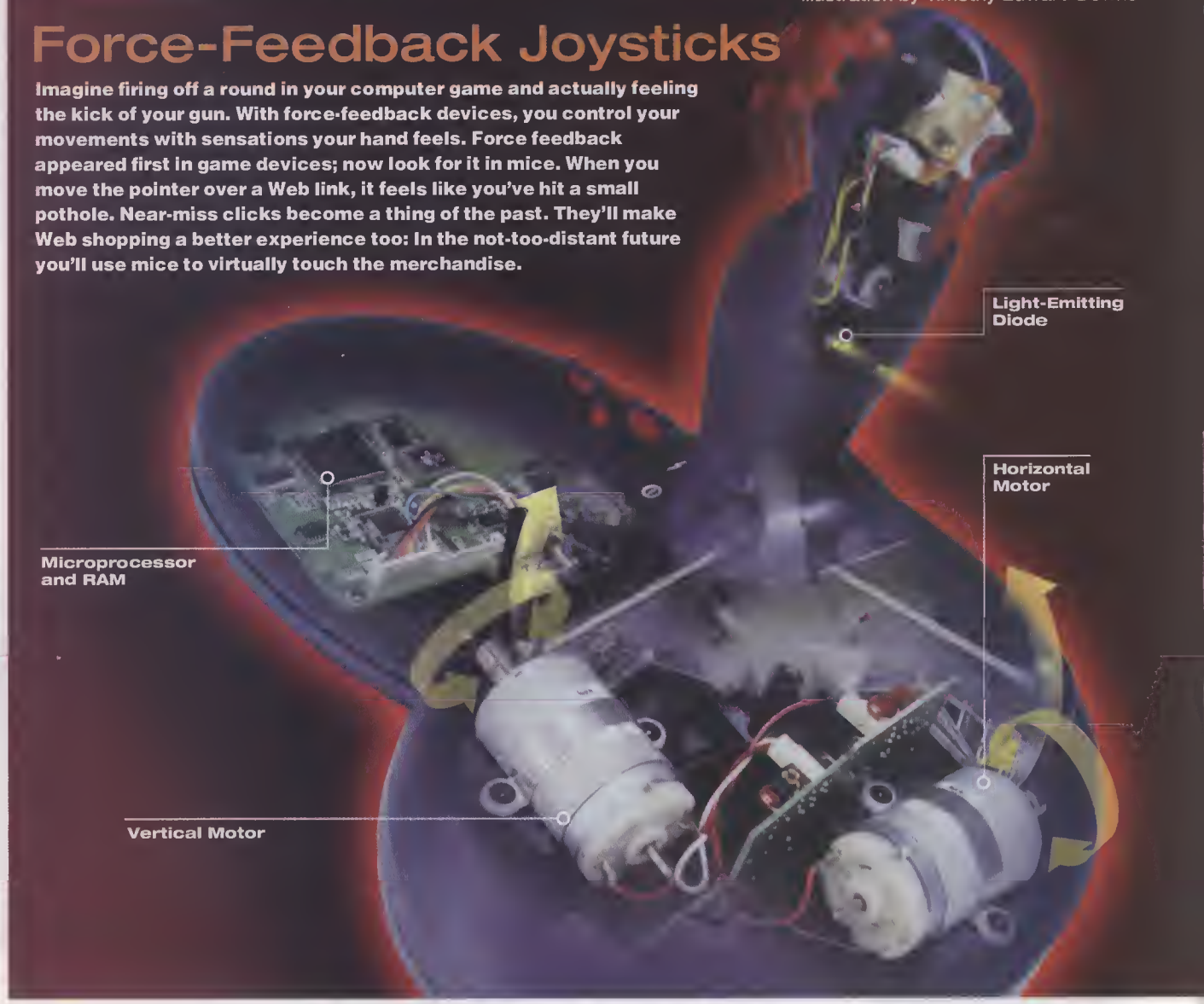
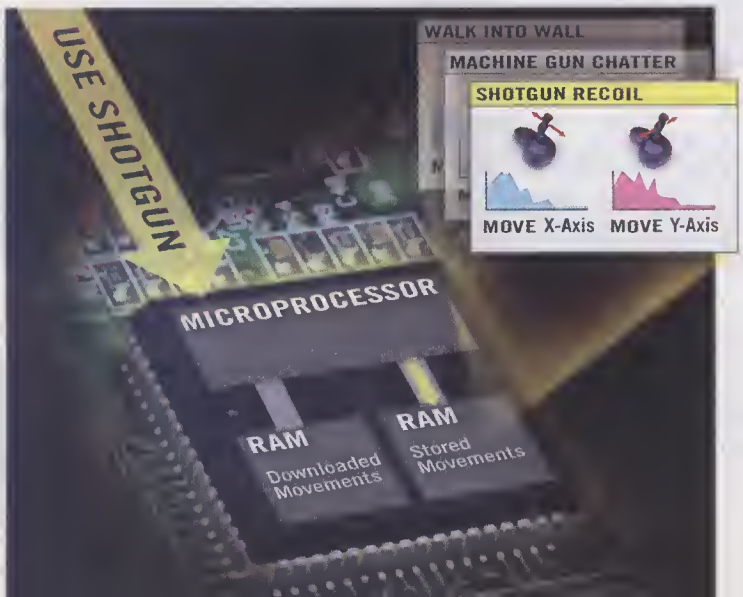
By Ron White
Illustration by Timothy Edward Downs

Force-Feedback Joysticks

Imagine firing off a round in your computer game and actually feeling the kick of your gun. With force-feedback devices, you control your movements with sensations your hand feels. Force feedback appeared first in game devices; now look for it in mice. When you move the pointer over a Web link, it feels like you've hit a small pothole. Near-miss clicks become a thing of the past. They'll make Web shopping a better experience too: In the not-too-distant future you'll use mice to virtually touch the merchandise.



Overview A microprocessor controls two motors, one each for vertical and horizontal movement. The motors make precise movements in two systems of gears that make the joystick handle harder or easier to move in any direction. In the handle itself, a diode that registers light makes sure there's a hand wrapped around the joystick. If there isn't, a signal from the diode cuts off the motors. Otherwise, without a hand pushing back to counter the force, the motors would push the stick out of control.



Chip The microprocessor contains RAM that holds predefined waveforms describing how the motors should move over a specific period of time—such as during the recoil of a shotgun. The software sends the processor tokens, short bursts of data that activate waveforms. Or the software downloads its own waveforms to the processor's RAM for custom force feedbacks.

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Take Control of Fonts

When it comes to fonts, Windows 95, 98, and NT give you amazing power that even professional publishers wouldn't have dreamed of 20 years ago. Now all you need is a PC and a printer. But how do you keep from being buried alive by the hundreds of fonts that come with your apps? Here's everything you need to know to use fonts better and to keep them from dragging your system down.

By Woody Leonhard

For more answers, head to www.pccomputing.com

How Many Do You Need? Many programs come with extra fonts that may be installed without your knowledge. The result is a Fonts folder full of typefaces you'll never use, and this slows down the performance of your system. Check out the Control Panel, Fonts folder and see how many files you have. For most people, more than 250 or 300 is too much for regular use. A font may have more than one file because there's a separate file for each variation like bold, italic, and so on.

Deleting Fonts If you think you have too many fonts, just delete them from the Control Panel, Fonts folder. It works like a normal Explorer folder, so you may prefer to move the fonts to another folder (in case you make a mistake and need to recall a font). Double-click on any font with a TTF extension to see brief details and a sample.

Leave 'Em Alone But don't get too enthusiastic: Some fonts Windows needs to survive; others are so commonly used you should keep them around. Some of these key fonts are hidden by Windows to make them harder to remove anyway. Delete at your peril Marlett, Arial, Times New Roman, Courier, and Wingdings. Microsoft Office users should keep Tahoma. Web users should keep any common browser fonts like Monotype, Trebuchet, Georgia, Verdana, Comic Sans, Arial Black, Impact, and WebDings.

Installing Fonts Most fonts are installed automatically by the program they come with. To manually install a font, choose File, Install New Font, from the Fonts folder. Choose the folder where the new font is located and click on the fonts you want, then click on OK. The files are copied to the Windows fonts folder.

Extras from Microsoft There's an extra set of fonts on the Office 97 CD. To install them, direct the Install New Fonts dialog box to the \ValuPack\Msfonts folder on the CD. There are also extra free fonts on the Microsoft Web site, including special fonts for Web browsing and updates to include the new Euro currency symbol. Get them from www.microsoft.com/typography/.

Details Galore If you want to get down to the nitty-gritty of fonts, download the Font Properties Extension from Microsoft at www.microsoft.com/typography/. Once it's installed, right-click on a font and choose Properties to see an amazing range of details on each font. Check out the Description tab for an explanation of what the font is designed for. The extension is free for Windows 95, 98, and NT.

Selecting Your Fonts Once you've installed your chosen fonts, you have to select them in your documents.

(continued on page 318)

E-Z REGISTRY FIND FILES FAST

In dozens of dialog boxes throughout Windows 98, you find reference to the location of the Win98 installation CD. When Win98 notices that it needs a file from the CD, it fills in the original installation location for you. For example, if you installed Win98 from drive F:, it references F:\Win98 for many of the necessary files. Similarly, network installations reference the drive from which Win98 was originally installed. Unfortunately, some programs go in and change that reference. And sometimes the location changes—a shared network drive moves around, or your CD suddenly gets a different drive letter. Here's how to tell Win98 where it should be looking for the setup CD.

Step 1 Prepare to use the Registry Editor. Back up the Registry using ScanReg. Make sure you understand the consequences of editing the Registry—or, more accurately, misediting the Registry.

Step 2 Bring up Regedit by clicking on Start, Run; typing regedit; and hitting Enter.

Step 3 Navigate to HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Setup.

Step 4 Change the SourcePath value to point to the location of the setup CD (typically, D:\Win98, where D is your CD-ROM's drive letter) or the shared network drive.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

FastTrack Schedule

has long provided *powerful project planning* and monitoring capabilities, and this upgrade polishes those capabilities and adds real-time collaboration tools.

PC Magazine, May 5, 1998

The latest edition improves the ***ease-of-use and power*** *of existing functions like setting up schedules,* allocating resources, calculating cash flow. . . .

Fortune, Technology Buyer's Guide, Winter 1998

...easy to learn and use, **and offers considerable *control* over even the most complex undertakings.**

PC Computing, May, 1998

The program's ***Strength*** *lies in its flexible layout and presentation tools.*

Info World, April 6, 1998

. . . a good bet for companies that are looking for basic but ***easy-to-configure*** project scheduling.

PC Week, March 18, 1998

We couldn't have said it better ourselves.

The experts agree. FastTrack Schedule 5.02 is the right choice for easy project scheduling — enabling you to create presentation quality schedules quickly and easily. Here are some of the ***NEW*** features found in version 5.02:

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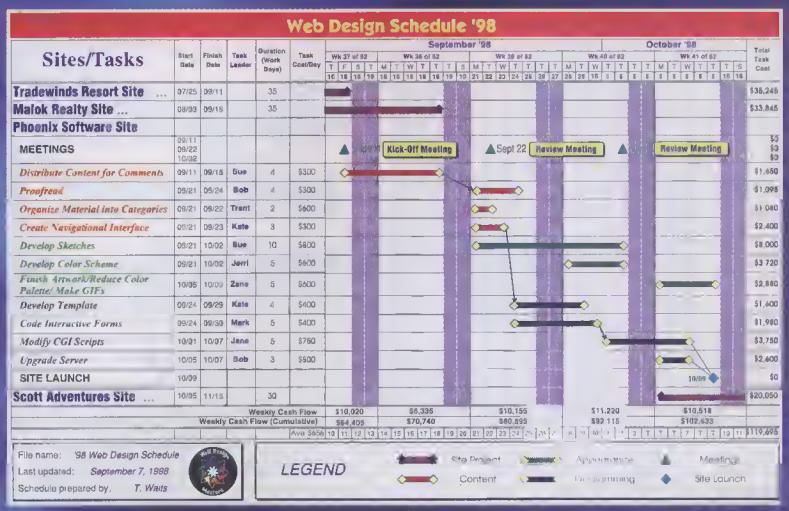
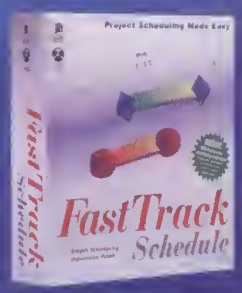
- And many more!



Why waste time struggling with complicated and costly project management programs? FastTrack Schedule 5.02 is easy-to-use, intuitive, and extremely flexible. It's available for Windows 3.1x, Windows NT 4.0, Windows 95, and Macintosh. And because it's also fully Windows 98 compatible, everyone in your office can stay on schedule today and into the 21st century. So whether you need to plan a day's worth of activities or a year's worth of projects, you'll stay on schedule and achieve project goals with FastTrack Schedule.



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Infolink 120 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Font Tips & Tricks (cont'd from page 316)

Unfortunately, many programs, like Microsoft Office, give you just a plain list of names to choose from. The names don't help you figure out what the font looks like. For Office 97 get our exclusive free utility PCC Real Fonts, which gives you a list of fonts as they appear. Download it from www.pccomputing.com/help/projects/9808/pccrealfonts/step1.html. Windows also comes with a little utility that lets you view all the characters in a font and select a single letter to install. Go to Start, Programs, Accessories, Character Map. It's handy for symbol fonts.

Sending a Font When you send a document to someone else it may look different if they don't have the same fonts. Microsoft Word tries to substitute alternative fonts if the document asks for a font that isn't installed. But you can send the necessary fonts with any Word document. In Word 97 choose Tools, Options, Save, and check Embed TrueType fonts. Save a little document file space by also selecting Embed Characters in Use Only. The necessary fonts are saved inside the Word document so you don't have to worry about any additional files.

Types of Fonts The world of fonts is full of strange and obscure terms inherited from the days of hot metal type. Here are a few to help you understand how fonts look. Serif fonts have little tags (called serifs) at the ends of letters—this article is in a serif font. Sans serif (without serifs) pertains to any font that doesn't have the little bits at the ends of letters—the subhead of this paragraph is in a sans serif font. Symbol fonts have characters other than the normal ones used in documents, like arrows.

Mixing Your Fonts Now you have a pile of fonts all organized. It's tempting to go crazy and put them all into your documents. Stop! For a clean and professional look you should stick to only two or three fonts per page. There's all sorts of complex advice on font selection, but here's a simple rule for novices to follow: Use sans serif fonts for headings and serif fonts for body text. Most professional publications follow this rule. A common pairing is Arial for headings and Times New Roman for body text. But that's overused because the fonts are defaults in Microsoft Word, so look at your fonts to choose a fresh combination.

Choosing Similar Fonts Windows 98 comes with a handy tool to help you choose fonts that have like characteristics. To find alternatives to, say, Arial (as a heading font), click on that font in the Fonts folder, then choose View, List Fonts by Similarity, and you'll see a list of fonts grouped as either Very Similar, Fairly Similar, or Not Similar. Do the same for Times New Roman and you'll find a new heading–body text pairing.

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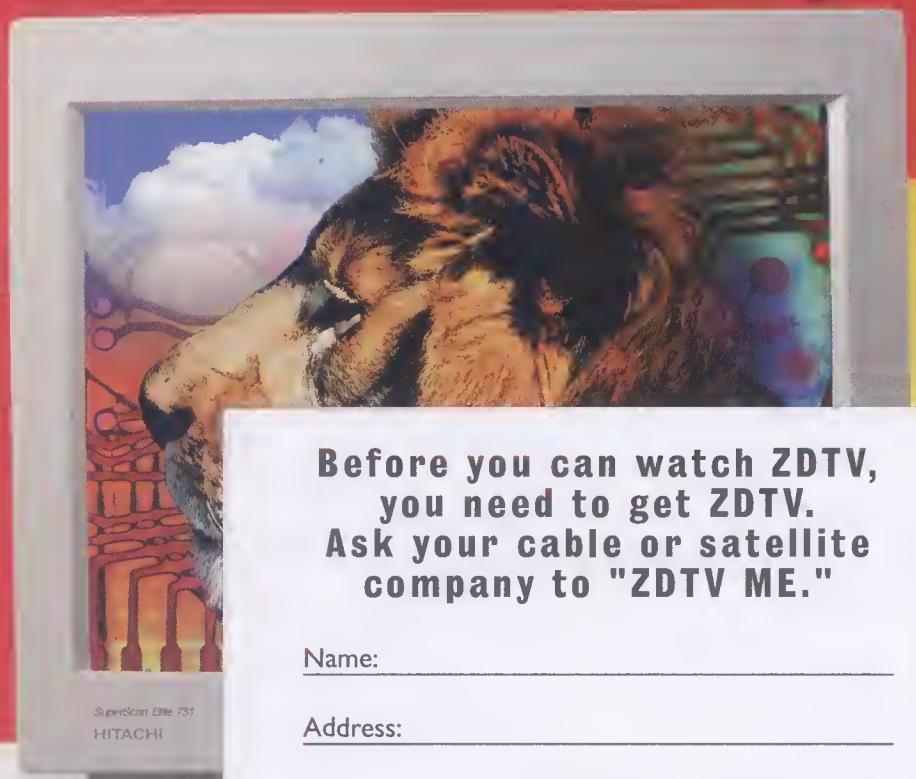

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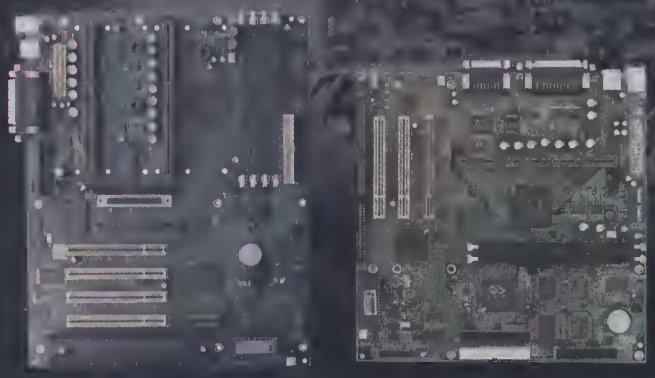

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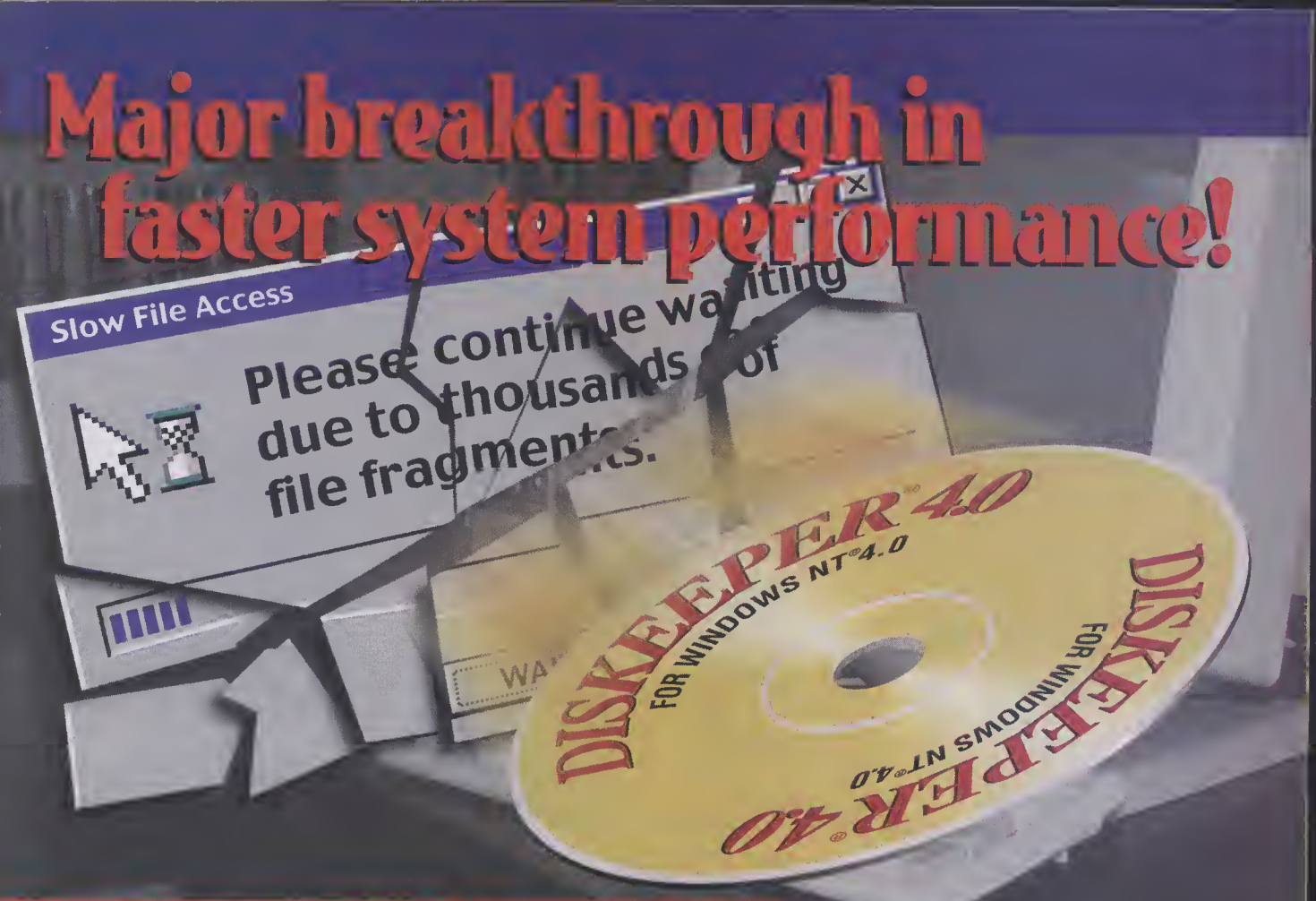

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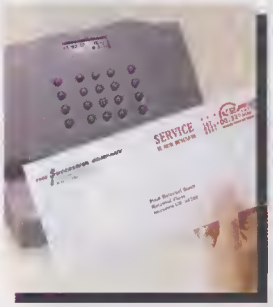

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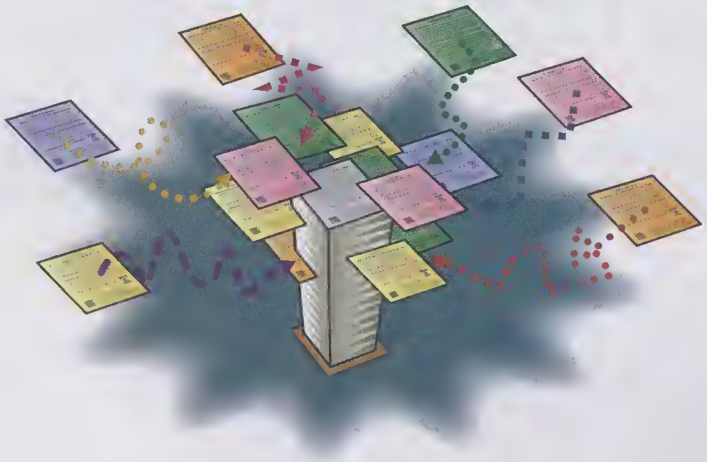

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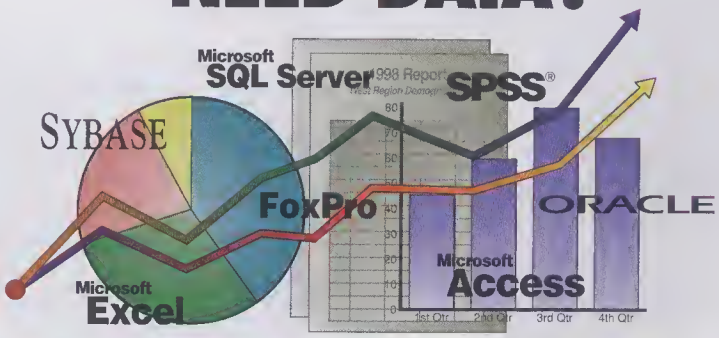

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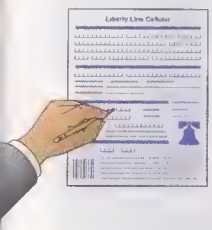

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InFocus	LitePro 730	1024 x 768	400	12 lbs.	no	remote mouse	1 years	no
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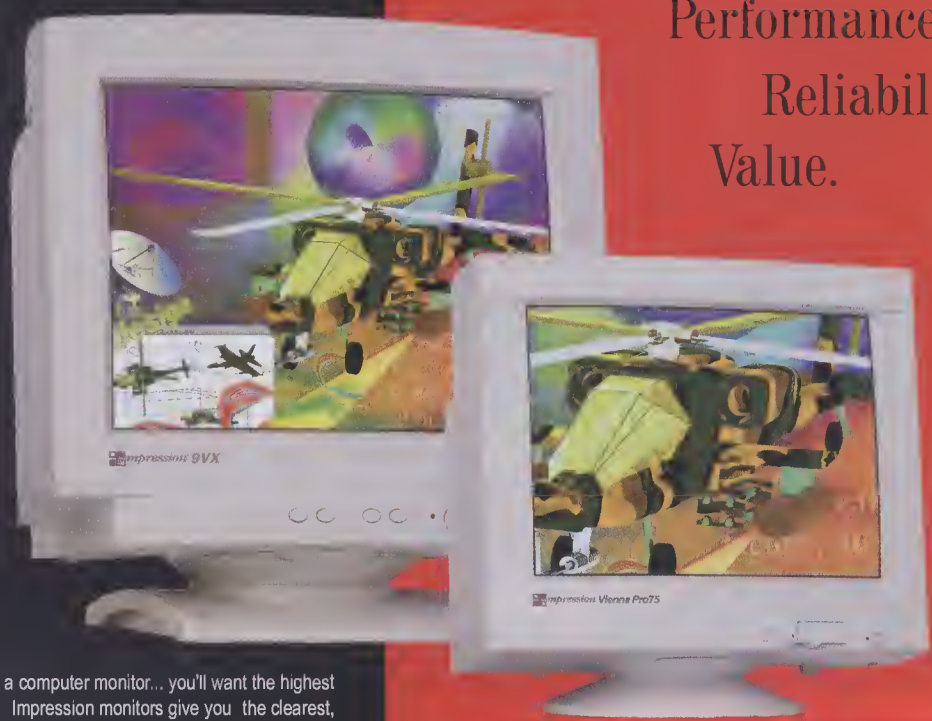

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OPTIMUM RESOLUTION	1280X1024 @85 Hz	1024X768 @ 85 Hz	1024X768 @ 85 Hz

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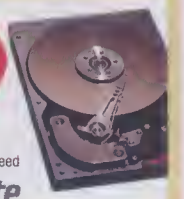

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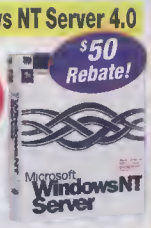

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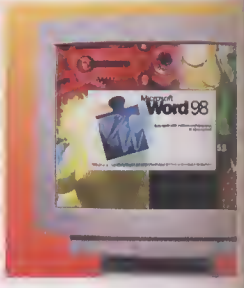

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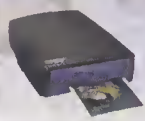

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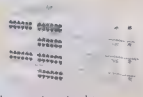

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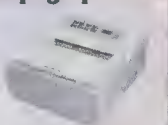

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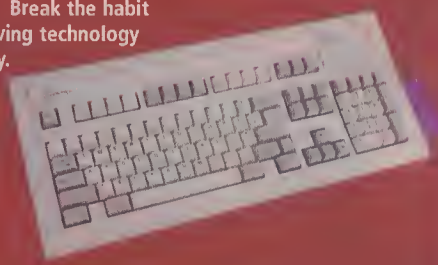

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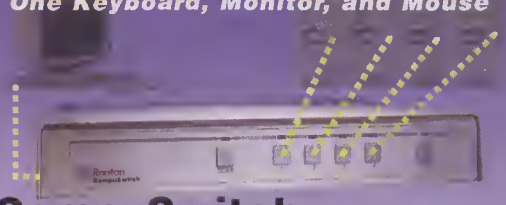

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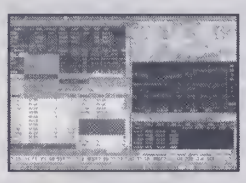

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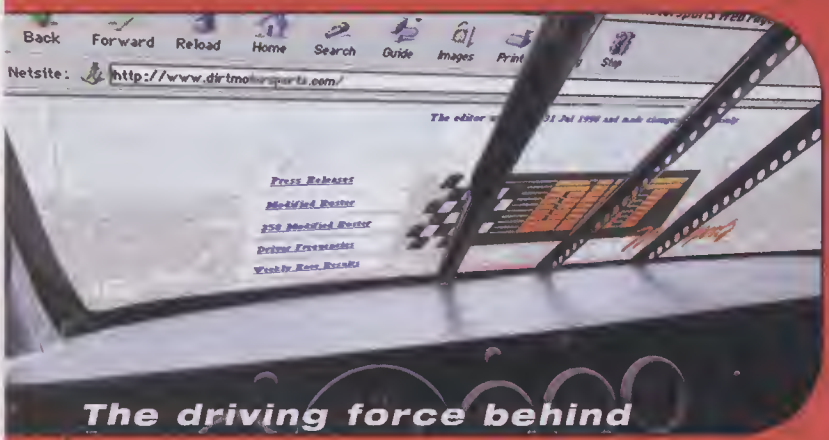

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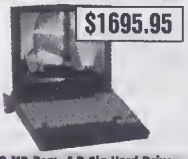

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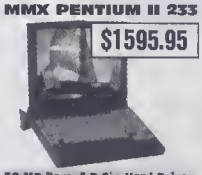

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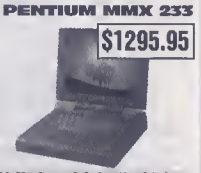

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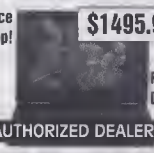

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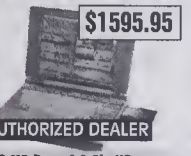

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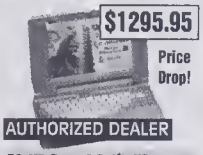

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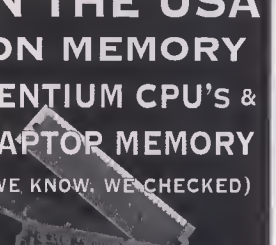

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The Games We Play

Whoa! That's one monster multimedia PC you bought for Christmas. Too bad you don't have any nifty games. But hey, Santa's plugged in. Here are some kickin' downloadable games, including a few of the hottest. But be warned: Don't waste your download time on these huge files without a 3-D accelerator and a passion for games.

Riveting Adventure

★★★★ The best-selling PC game of all time is still the fantasy adventure Myst. Would you like to score a free copy of it? Well, you can't. Red Orb doesn't provide even a crippled version of Myst for free. But you can download the next best thing—Riven: The Sequel to Myst. Or at least part of it. The demo version includes one of the many worlds in Riven, just waiting for you to uncover clues to the game's story line. It will give you a visual taste of the game's stunning detailed artwork. Oh, and the download is available only to residents of the United States. So take that, Bolivia!

Riven: The Sequel to Myst

LATEST CROP

★★★ Are all the shoot-'em-up games getting a little bloody for you? Then download Crop Circles: Escape from Planet 3. You pilot a flying saucer that makes crop circles and abducts cows—watch out for the mad ones—all the while avoiding "biped farm beings" (farmers), photographers, and G-men. Sort of a combination maze, catch-me, cow-sucking kind of game. If you think that sounds intense, you better chow down some Xanax. It's easy enough for kids, but I admit that I played with it longer than I should have and still didn't exhaust the three levels that are already unlocked in the download version. There are 17 more you can unlock; $20 for the whole shebang. Crop Circles: Escape from Planet 3

It's a Raider!

★★★★ Hi, big boy. It's me, Lara, Lara Croft. You remember me, don't you? The merciless femme Lara from Tomb Raider? Yeah, that's right, sugar, the animated gal with the lethal tah-tahs out to there. If you haven't already paid for the pleasure of my company, so to speak, I'll be happy to give you a little tease in two demos, customized for really hot 3-D cards. Together the demos make up Level 2—the dangerous city of Vilcabamba—from the original game. Sure, it's not the entire 15 levels in the full game, but remember, lover: Size doesn't count.

Tomb Raider

Heads Down!

★★★ I admit I had a problem with Take No Prisoners when it first came out on CD-ROM. That's because it takes a whole new angle on the 3-D shooter game. You control your macho character from two top-down camera angles, which takes a bit of getting used to, especially if Quake is your game. The world has been stretched vertically, so now you can blow away some post-apocalyptic mutant below or above you. The playable demo has one of the 20 territories in the retail version, plus one of the multiplayer territories for play by up

YOU'RE DOOMED, YOU QUAKING HERETIC!

★★★★★ Quick, a word-association test: *id.* If the first thing you thought of was *Freud*, get outta here! But if you thought of id Software, the developer of Quake and Doom, wipe the drool off your chin, soldier, and read on. The id archives are a treasure trove of playable demos that let you blast, bang, and batter your way through half a dozen id action games. There is, of course, Quake itself—or three Strogg-filled levels of it. You'll also find shareware versions of Doom—including executables for Linux and Solaris—and Doom II. While you're there, pick up shareware versions of Hexen and Heretic. And if you've already finished the full versions of the id games but long for more, jack into Gameoholic's download section, where you can pull down a passel of Doom and Quake levels.

id Software and Gameoholic

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY. ILLUSTRATIONS BY REGAN HONDA, CHRIS LENSCH, SCOTT MATTHEWS, AND ELIZABETH BRANDT.

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to eight people on a net. There are fewer weapons and enemies, and none of the vehicles work, but what the heck? The price is right.
Take No Prisoners

Don't Be Without SiN

☆☆☆☆☆ Activision's SiN was a cult sensation even before it hit the shelves. When I downloaded the demo—two single-player and two death-match levels—there was already a SiN Web Ring on the Internet for tournaments. The game's a from-the-shoulder shoot-'em-up, but what makes it different are story lines you have to follow—as opposed to just blasting anything that moves.
SiN

Hey, Buddy! Let's Get Muddy?

☆☆☆☆☆ Can you live with a racing game that offers only four monster trucks and one track? How about if you also get free Internet play? I thought you couldn't resist. Download Microsoft's playable demo of Monster Truck Madness 2. It's a lot like car racing except all the drivers are drunk good ol' boys. And if you do finish a six-pack while playing the game, the fact that there's only one race circuit doesn't really matter.
Monster Truck Madness 2

BUBBA'S DOVE WAR

☆☆ **The hottest games these days let you emulate real-life hunting. They're so realistic you'd swear you felt chiggers crawling up your legs. The shareware version of North Carolina Dove Hunter limits you to two shells at a time and ten doves per hunt. The game's so easy that even Bubba, Jr., will bag his limit. If you get bored with it as fast as I did, that's no problem. Of course, I think all hunting games are boredom on disc, but then I don't hunt anything that can be found in the fridge. But if you're overwhelmed with blood lust, the cost for the full version is $10.** North Carolina Dove Hunter

Forsake Descent

☆☆☆☆☆ Have you seen the boxes of Forsaken with that sexy tattooed woman on the front? Well, she's not in the box or on the disc. She's just a ploy to attract teenage boys. OK, middle-aged men, too. But if you're more interested in gaming action than other kinds of action, download the Forsaken demo. Basically, it's Descent with up-to-date 3-D graphics that squeeze every last pixel out of your accelerator card. On some kind of space bike, you blast your way through a maze where there's no up or down.
Forsaken

Seeing Stars

☆☆☆☆ Even if you have the retail version of Starcraft, it's still worth a couple hours of download time to get the preview version of the real-time strategy game that gives stiff competition to Total Annihilation. It has three all-new missions that foreshadow the galactic war that's the setting for the full version of Starcraft. It also has a tutorial mission to teach you the art of interstellar war, plus head-to-head play over modem, serial link, LAN, or the Internet.
Starcraft

Double Trouble

☆☆☆☆☆ What? More freebies from Microsoft? You'd think it was Christmas. Huh? Oh, right, it *is* Christmas. Well, any time of year is a good time to grab the preview of Microsoft's spanking new Urban Assault. It's a real-time strategy game with a topping of action. The trial version has 6 of the full game's 41 single-player levels, 2 of the game's 55 multiplayer levels, a few training missions, and 7 of the 15 combat vehicles.
Urban Assault

THE OL' ANNIHILATOR

☆☆☆☆☆ **What? You think the Kahuna has nothing better to do than play games? The truth is I have to look at so many games that none of them stays on my hard drive longer than a week before it's kicked off in favor of new games. Except for Total Annihilation. When I reviewed the CD version of TA earlier this year, I got hooked. It still claims a place on the hard drive for those rare times when I'm not running software through its paces so you louts don't have to. Anyway, the real-time strategy game is yours—or at least 3 of its 50 missions. See you in a few years.** Total Annihilation

By Ron White

For live links to all these plus 1,001 more free downloads, head to www.pccomputing.com

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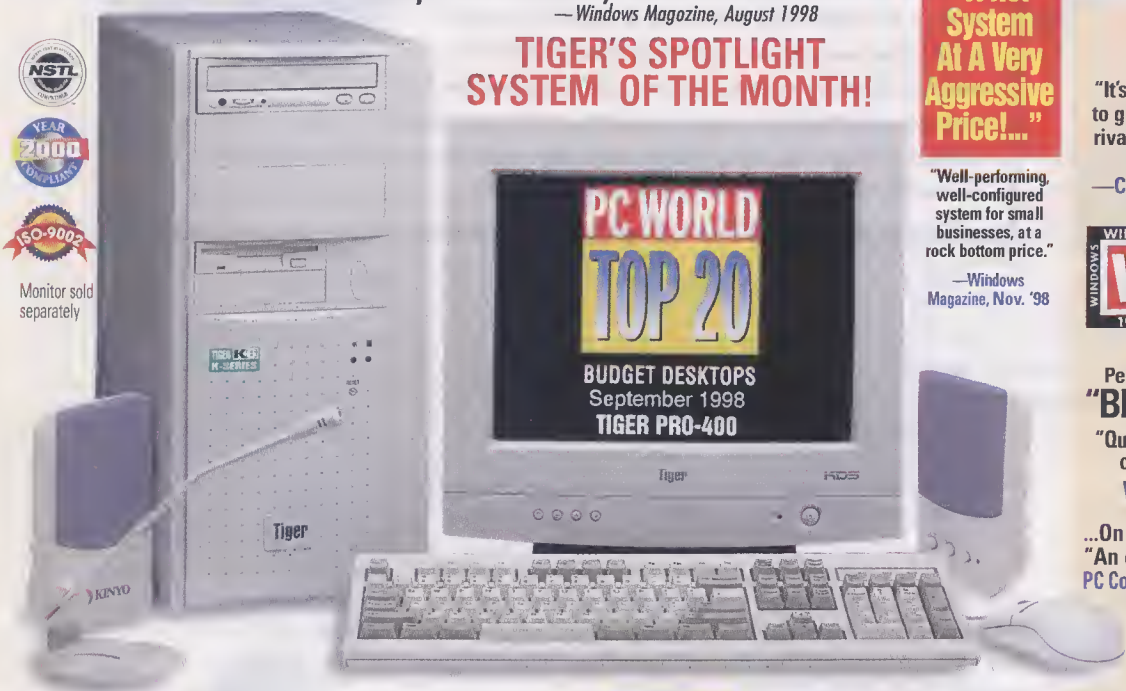

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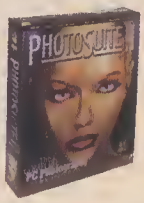

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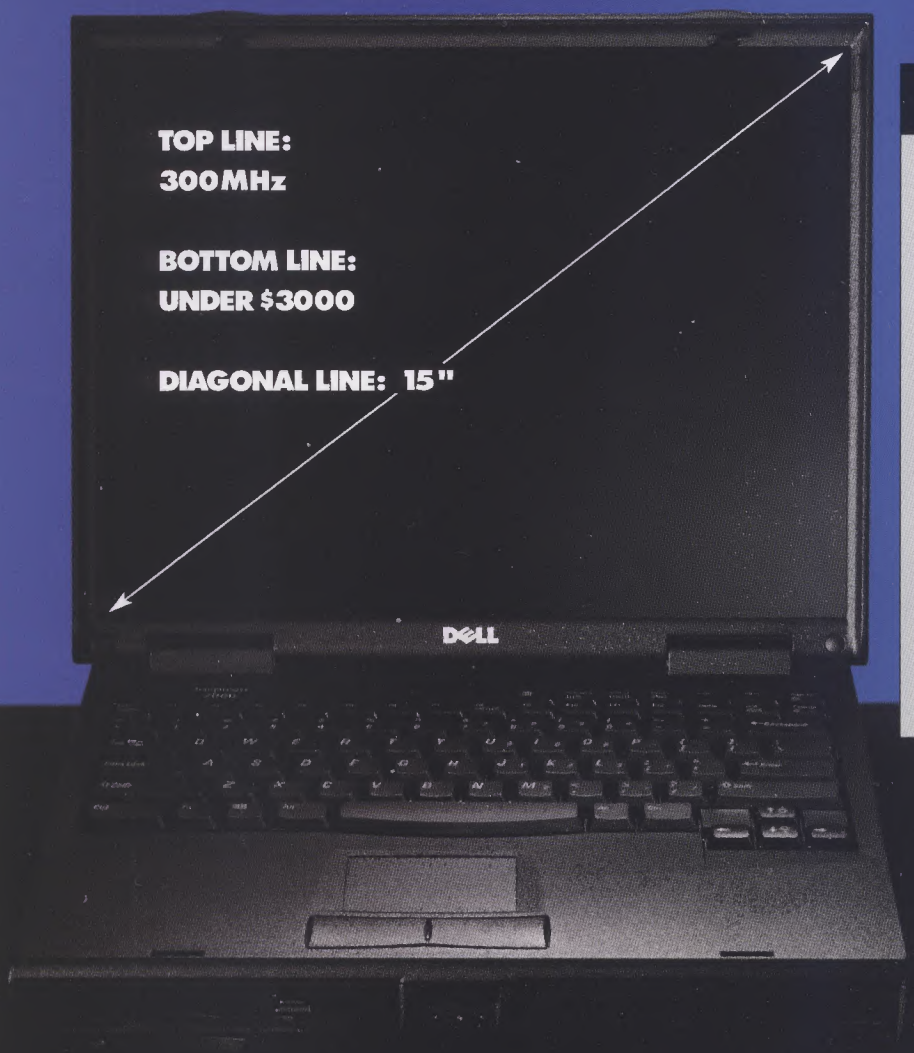

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- 4.8X DVD-ROM Drive and Decoder Card
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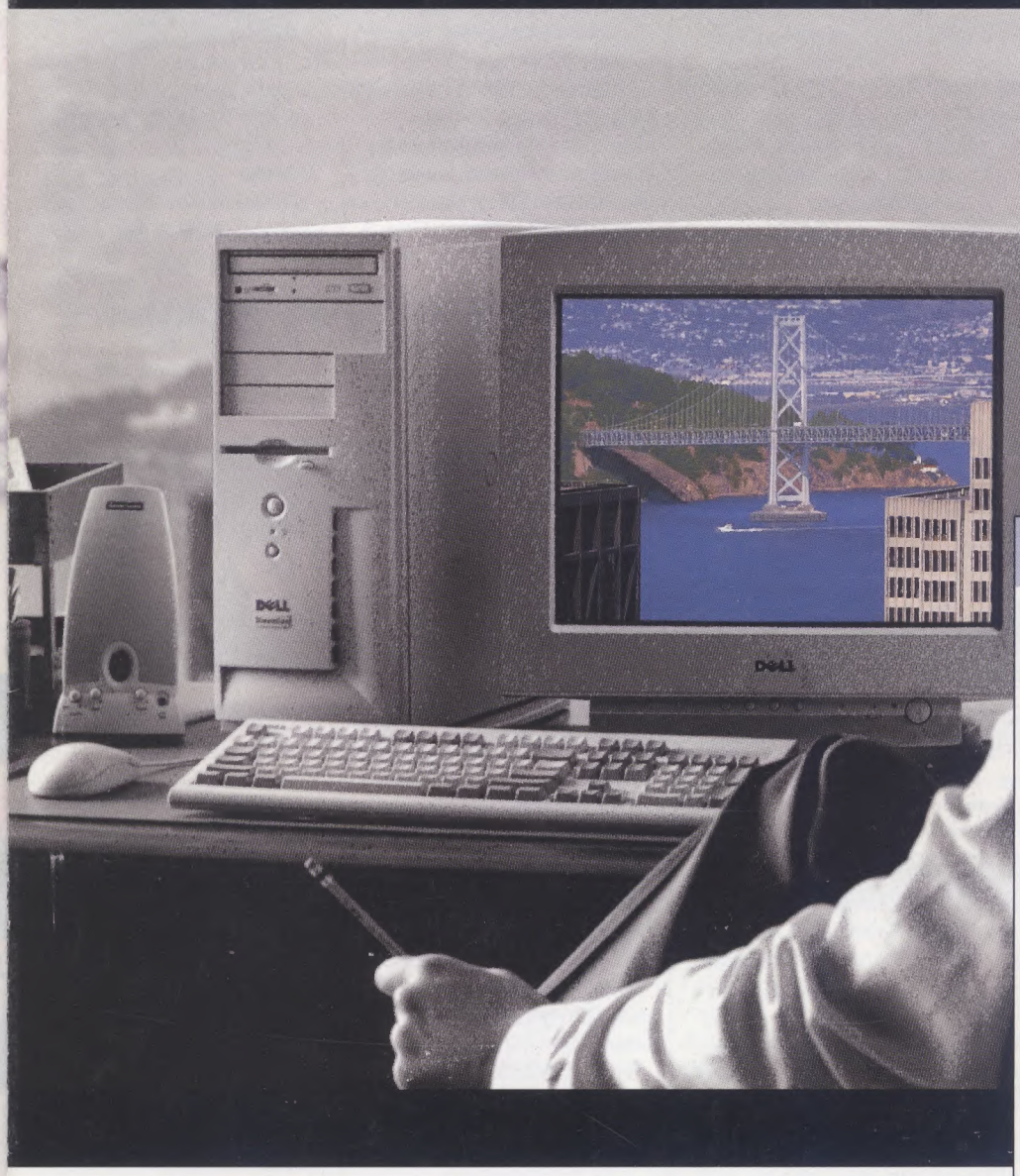

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